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RUSSIA

PAST AND PRESENT

ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

HENRIETTA A. FRANCES

WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
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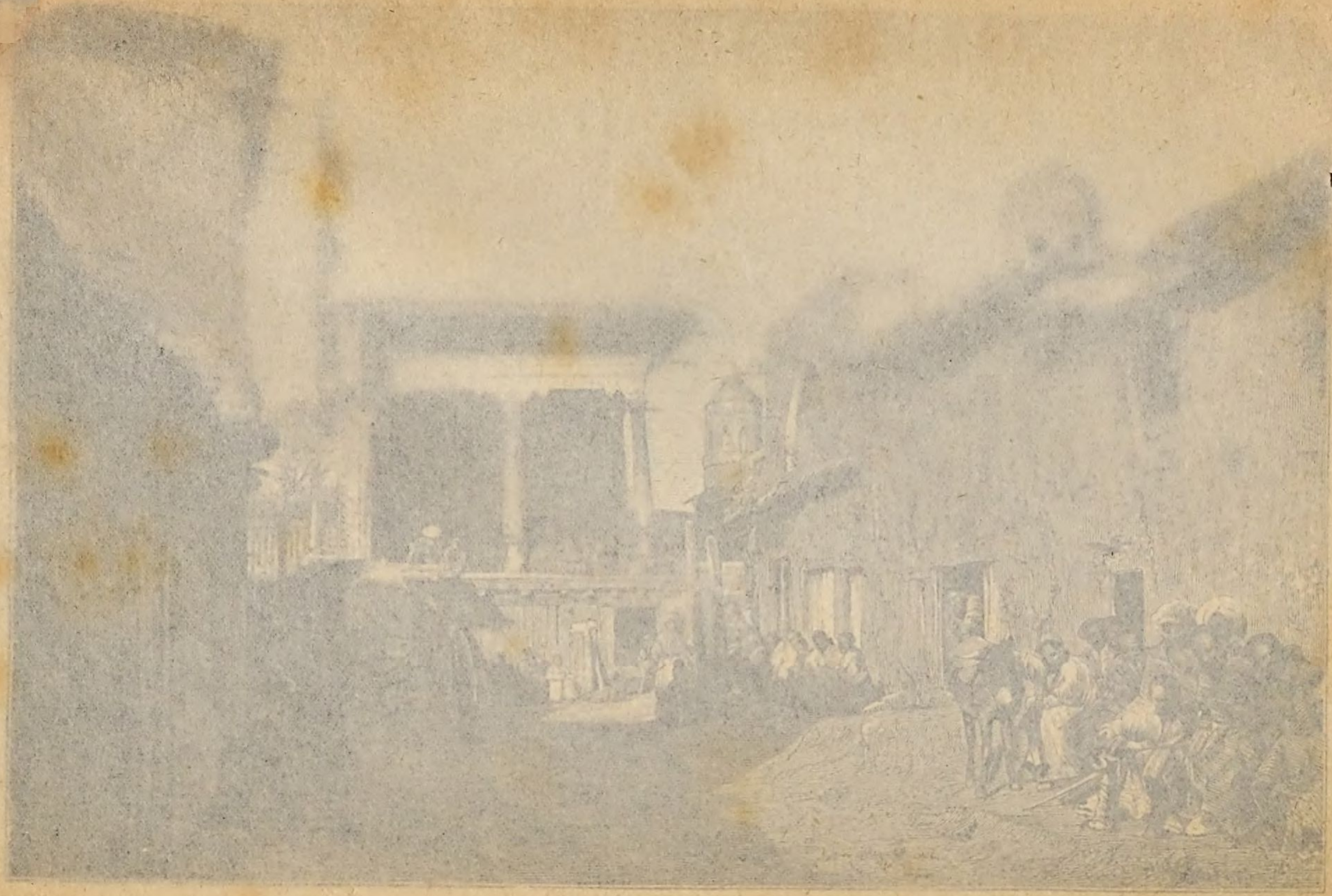

STREET IN TÁSHKENT.

(See p. 412.)

RUSSIA,

PAST AND PRESENT.

ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

LANKENAU AND OELNITZ.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE facts and descriptions in the following pages have been taken mainly from a work published in Leipsic in 1876 and the following year. This work, entitled "Das heutige Russland," was compiled from numerous sources by H. v. Lankenau and L. v. d. Oelnitz; and it is stated in the preface to the second volume that the first volume, which treats of European Russia, has been added to the libraries of all the Russian military seminaries for the use of the pupils in the higher classes. The witness thus given by the Russian Government to the accuracy of the account justifies its adoption as the basis of "Russia, Past and Present." But as the authors have spoken very briefly of matters which are of the greatest interest to English readers, and as much has happened since the publication of their work, their statements have been supplemented by information gathered from the many trustworthy works which have recently appeared on European and Central Asian Russia.

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RUSSIA, PAST AND PRESENT.

CHAPTER I.

Early Inhabitants—The Finns—The Heathen Slavs—The Varangians—Adoption of Christianity—Vladimir the Great—Yaroslaf I.—Internal Divisions—Ivan the Great—Ivan the Terrible—The Romanofs—Peter the Great—Elizabeth—Catherine the Great—Alexander I.—Nicholas—Alexander II.

OUR information concerning the earlier inhabitants of Russia is derived solely from Herodotus, who, writing about 445 B.C., gives some account of the barbarous tribes with whom his fellow-countrymen, the Greek colonists on the Euxine, were brought into frequent contact. According to him, the broad plains watered by the Rha, the Tanais, the Borysthenes, and the Tyras, were occupied by the warlike Scythians. In the far north the Thyrsagetæ roamed through the forests in pursuit of game, and the intervening districts were inhabited by the Sarmatians, a race of agriculturists and shepherds.

Little trustworthy information can be obtained concerning the later fortunes of these ancient tribes; but in the sixth century of the Christian era we find the great Slavonic family established in a tract of

country extending as far westward as the mouth of the Elbe, and southward to a line drawn from the northern shores of the Adriatic to the Black Sea. Tradition represents these Slavs to have been worshippers of Svarog the Creator, and of a multitude of deities subservient to him, whom they propitiated by sacrifices, but to have had no regular priesthood. Though little is known of their manners and customs, it would seem that their family life was strictly patriarchal; the father held supreme authority in his household; a cluster of family communities formed a *volost*, which was governed by a head, and held the lands in common; and in the centre of these lands was the *grad* or *gorod*, that is, the town, "the religious as well as political centre; for in it were religious rites performed and sacrifices offered up."[1] Mr. Ralston says that "Byzantine and other annals tell of them as a people strong, and fierce, and brave, exceedingly hospitable towards strangers, and tolerably tender to domestic slaves, but ferociously cruel in warfare, and lamentably indifferent to personal cleanliness; who expected a widow to die on her husband's grave or pyre, and who deemed it the privilege of a mother to slay her superfluous daughters, the duty of a child to provide in a similar way for an aged parent."[2]

[1] Ralston, "Early Russian History," p. 181. [2] Ib., p. 4.

A branch of the Slavonic family was settled in the districts bordering on lake Ilmen, of which the city of Novgorod was the centre, and laid the foundation of the empire which now embraces the greater portion of eastern Europe. A little more than a thousand years have elapsed since the remarkable incident occurred which gave the name Russia to the empire, and formed the commencement of its history. In 862, according to the Chronicler Nestor, the Slavonians, weary of their internal dissensions and revolutions, invited the Varangian Tribe, or family of Rus, to cross the sea and rule over them. In compliance with this request, the three brothers, Rurik, Sinëus, and Truvor, assembled their kinsmen and companions, and took possession of the territories, which were henceforth called *Russkaya*, Russian. On the death of Sinëus and Truvor, Rurik became sole ruler in his city of Novgorod, which he transformed into a fortress. Meanwhile two other Varangians, Ascold and Dir, with Rurik's consent, seized Kief; and, having established themselves there set out on an expedition against Constantinople; but were unsuccessful owing to a violent and, according to the Greeks, a miraculous tempest which destroyed their ships. Ascold and Dir also attributed their defeat to the God of the Christians; and are said to have asked for a

priest to teach them Christianity, and, on their return home, to have founded a Church on the high ground of Kief, the very spot where tradition says that St. Andrew the Apostle had preached the Gospel.[1]

The obscure history of these Varangians has long been a subject of learned strife. According to one theory they were a Scandinavian nation; according to another, Slavonians from some Baltic or Scandinavian settlement; and according to a third, they were merely a band of adventurers, of various nationalities, in which the Scandinavian element was the greatest. Each theory has found earnest advocates; but there are two important points which do not admit of doubt, that with the advent of these Varangians the history of Russia properly begins; and that these strangers were soon absorbed into the mass of their new subjects, and were so rapidly "Slavonized," that Rurik's grandson Sviatoslaf bore a distinctly Slavonic name.

Rurik and his successors rapidly established their power in South Russia. Oleg, Rurik's brother and successor, sailed down the Dnieper, and having seized Kief and put to death Ascold and Dir made that city the capital of his kingdom. On his death Igor, Rurik's son, came to the throne, but was killed in

[1] Ralston, "Early Russian History," p. 15.

middle age by the Drevlians; he left one son, during whose minority his mother Olga, as regent, governed the state with great wisdom and success. At the end of twelve years Sviatoslaf assumed the power. Olga visiting Constantinople embraced Christianity, but was unable to induce her son to follow her example. Sviatoslaf died in 972, but it was not until eight years afterwards that his youngest son Vladimir established himself as ruler of the kingdom. At first "nothing but a barbarian, wily, voluptuous, and bloody," he became at last a Christian; and after his baptism married the Princess Anna, sister of the Greek emperors Basil and Constantine, and persuaded his subjects to adopt Christianity as the national religion.

It was in 988 that the kingdom became Christian; and henceforward the extension of Christianity kept pace with the advance of the Russo-Slav race. It had not, however, been accepted without mature deliberation. The Church established at Kief by Ascold and Dir had little if any influence, and Olga's example had remained for the time inoperative. The Volga Bulgarians were anxious that the Grand Prince Vladimir should become a convert to Islam; but the report of the envoys whom he despatched to collect information concerning the rival faiths, was unfavourable to Mohammedanism: "We have visited the Bulgarians," they said, "and have seen how they bow

down in their temples, and then sit down again and look to the right and left as if possessed. There is no cheerfulness among them, but a melancholy existence and an unpleasant savour; their religion is not good." Placed in the painful alternative of choosing between a religion which forbids wine and another which condemns polygamy, the Russ decided for the faith which did not interfere with his potations. The Boyards were also strongly in favour of the adoption of Greek Christianity. They said to Vladimir, "Thy grandmother Olga, the wisest of women, would not have adopted the Greek faith had she not known it to be better than all others."

After the introduction of Christianity the Russians used the translation of the Bible, made by Cyril and Methodius in the Illyrian or Servian dialect of their native town Thessalonica. From this time forward we find two recognized languages in use, the vernacular Russian, and the Church language, the Slavonic.

In 1015 Vladimir died. He had founded schools in which the Holy Books were taught, and had lived a reformed life which Nestor the chronicler cannot sufficiently praise. He was buried in Kief by the side of the Princess Anna his wife, and is honoured to this day as Saint Vladimir of the Orthodox Church.

Yaroslaf I., the successor of Vladimir, ruled at Kief from 1019 to 1054, and "occupied a glorious

place among the princes of his time." [1] Though he was successful in war, and both extended and established the Russian power, his internal administration of the kingdom, and the compiling of the Russkaya Pravda, the first written code of laws in Russia, give him the best claim to the title of illustrious. In his reign the city of Kief reached the highest pitch of its splendour; it was beautiful in its buildings, rich in its churches, and the admiration of the writers of the West.[2]

After the death of Yaroslaf I., the empire was greatly weakened by the partitions of the kingdom into Appanages. The national custom apportioned to each son of the reigning prince, as a descendant of Rurik, a portion of the royal patrimony as a separate principality, and made each one independent of all the others except the eldest, who reigned at Kief and was styled the Grand Prince. When the Grand Prince of Kief died, his son was not necessarily his rightful heir; but his uncle, or brother, if he had one, or whichever of the princes was the eldest, succeeded. This old national law of the Slavs conflicted with the Greek law, which recognized the son as the heir of his father's possessions, and it was a continual source of civil wars.

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[1] Rambaud, "History of Russia," translated by Leonora Lang, vol. i., p. 78. The references throughout are to this translation. [2] Ibid, vol. i., p. 80.

It is impossible to give in a short space the names of the minor princes who succeeded each other during the 300 years after the death of Vladimir's son Yaroslaf. The historian Karamsin himself confesses that to attempt it would be to lose oneself in chaos. But one thing is clear, that by their internecine struggles they so reduced the forces of the nation that great portions of the western provinces were seized and occupied by the Lithuanians, the Poles, and the German military orders. And finally in 1224, after a bloody battle on the Kalka, the Mongols made their way to the Dnieper, murdered their Russian prisoners, suffocated the Grand Princes Mistislaf, Andreas, and Alexander; and, after celebrating a ghastly feast over their bodies, rode back again to their Asiatic homes.

For thirteen years nothing more was heard of them; but in 1237 Batu returned with his Mongol forces, stormed and sacked Riazan, Moscow, and Vladimir, and in 1239 attacked Kief, burned the houses, palaces, and churches, and massacred or carried into captivity the inhabitants. During the greater part of two centuries the Khan of the Golden Horde, whose head quarters were at Sarai on the Volga, exacted crushing tribute from the Russian princes, and held supreme rule over the country. One of these tributary Russian princes, Alexander Nevsky, the prince of Novgorod, shines conspicuously as a ruler and a commander. In

1241 he won the glorious victory of the Neva, from which he takes his name, over the German Knights with their Tchoud allies, and another victory over the Lithuanians; and was honoured by Batu with the rank of Prince of Kief, and afterwards with that of Grand Prince of Vladimir, which was then the capital of Russia. It was through his mediation that the Khan pardoned the inhabitants of certain towns who had rebelled against extortionate taxation, and slain the tax-gatherers. A desperate effort to shake off the hated Mongol yoke was made in 1380 by the valiant Grand Prince Dimitri, the son of Ivan II.; but the Mongols reduced him to his former state of dependence, and laid in ashes Moscow, which had at this date supplanted Vladimir as the capital of Russia, as Vladimir had previously supplanted Kief.

The rule of the Mongols in Russia came to an end through their wars with the Tartars. In 1480, when the successors of Timour Beyg had broken down the power of the Golden Horde, Ivan the Third, or the Great, succeeded in vanquishing both Mongols and Tartars, and driving them from the land. But the efforts of Ivan, "one of the firmest and wisest sovereigns of whom Russia can boast,"[1] far from being confined to the deliverance of his country from a foreign foe, were directed to consolidating the Russian monarchy.

[1] Ralston, "Early History of Russia," p. 108.

The wealthy commercial city of Novgorod, a member of the Hanseatic League, which had become to all intents a republic, and had for years maintained its independence, was conquered and deprived of its liberties. Pskof in like manner, a few years afterwards, submitted to Ivan's government. The system of appanages was abolished; and all the provinces were welded into one empire, which Ivan governed under the title of Grand Prince.

Ivan's marriage with Sophia Palæologus, niece of the last Christian emperor of the East, made him the heir of the Emperor of Byzantium, and opened a way for the entrance of Byzantine culture into Russia. In his reign the independence of the Church was established, and the native bishops were empowered to elect the Metropolitan. Under a ruler, who was a statesman and a lawgiver as well as a conqueror, Russia became a vigorous kingdom. Ivan, to save it from disruption and dismemberment and from the evils of a disputed inheritance, proclaimed his son Vassili or Basil his heir. Nor did his energetic endeavours to benefit his people end here. He did his utmost to bring civilizing influences to bear upon them. Together with the Greek emigrants, who accompanied his wife Sophia and "gave to Russia statesmen, diplomatists, engineers, architects, theologians, and Greek books," came also Italians, and notably Aristotle Fioraventi of Bologna, who

became his architect, military engineer, and master of artillery; Marco Ruffo, his ambassador in Persia; Pietro Antonio, who built his imperial palace; and the metal founder, Paul Bossio.[1] Amongst other great works Ivan rebuilt the Kreml or Kremlin, a fortified inclosure in the form of a triangle, in solid white stone instead of wood, and surmounted it by high battlements and eighteen towers. He died in 1505; and was succeeded by his son Basil IV., who reigned twenty-eight years, and carried on his father's policy of consolidating the empire under an autocratic ruler.

Basil's son, Ivan IV., surnamed the Terrible, was four years old when he inherited the throne. He was the first to assume the title of Tsar or Autocrat of all Russia, and he reigned from 1533 to 1584. During his long minority the Boyards trained him in acts of cruelty, and developed all his evil passions. When he assumed the government, he acted with a savage barbarity such as the world has seldom seen; and the massacre at Novgorod alone justifies the title of Terrible by which he is distinguished. Not content with conquering the factious Boyards, and crushing all opposition and intrigue, he put numbers of his subjects to death and deluged the country with blood. Meanwhile he

[1] Rambaud, "History of Russia," vol. i., p. 246.

carried on wars successfully against the Swedes, Poles, and Tartars, conquered Kazan and Astrakhan, and made arrangements for the exploration and conquest of Siberia. By the establishment of a body-guard of Opritchniki, "the thousand of the Tsar to sweep treason off Russian soil," he laid the foundation of a standing army. But war was not his only pursuit; German artisans, artists, and learned men were invited to Russia; and a commercial treaty was concluded with Elizabeth Queen of England after the discovery of the sea-way to Archangel by English navigators.

Ivan had in a fit of rage killed his eldest son; and he was succeeded by his second son Feodor, who was feeble in body and mind, and more of a monk than a monarch. Feodor had a brother, Demetrius, who was an infant at the time of his father's death; and whom Boris, the brother of Irene the Tsar's wife, murdered with the design of securing the throne to himself. Consequently in 1598, when Feodor died, the family of Rurik the Varangian in the male line came to an end, having accomplished the work of founding Russian unity. Boris then seized the throne, and governed with such firmness as to attract the friendship of the Western powers. Serfdom, which had been long growing, was finally established by him. He died in 1605, after a short but troubled reign, leaving a son Feodor, whom he commended to his people as his successor.

A monk, called Gregory Otrepief, had some time previously declared himself to be Demetrius, the second son of Ivan IV., whom Boris had murdered. He asserted that he had been saved from assassination by the substitution of another child in his place. On the death of Boris he was at once proclaimed by the troops; and after deposing and murdering Feodor II., the son of Boris, was hailed with joy as the descendant of Rurik. Another pretender, Basil Chouiski, deposed this impostor after a reign of thirteen months; and for a time perfect anarchy prevailed. In 1610 Vladislas, the son of Sigismund king of Poland, was elected Tsar by the Boyards, and the Poles took possession of Moscow in his name; but they were driven out, and Vladislas abandoned the throne.

The downfall of Russia seemed imminent. At last, in 1613, the Boyards, having settled their differences, agreed to raise to the throne Michael Romanof, then only seventeen years of age, the son of Philarete, Metropolitan of Moscow, and a descendant in the female line of the ancient imperial house. His moderation and love of peace fitted him to be the healer of the internal breaches of his kingdom, and to come to terms with his enemies without. Having yielded to the Poles Smolensk, Severia, and Tchernigof, he set to work to reunite and strengthen his divided nation. He was so

successful that his son Alexis, who reigned from 1645 to 1676, was able to recover from the Poles Smolensk and Severia, and to compel the Cossacks to acknowledge the supremacy of Russia. In this reign trade routes to Persia and China were opened through Siberia.

The reign of Alexis's successor, Feodor, was remarkable for the settlement of the question of precedence, which had long been one of the plagues of Russia. An assembly of the higher clergy and Boyards decreed that the Books of Rank should be burnt, that disputes should be forbidden for the future, and that the penalty for disputing should be deprivation of nobility and of wealth.

On Feodor's death in 1682, the relations of the first wife of Alexis claimed the throne for her son, the weak-minded Ivan, Feodor's brother, and proposed to associate with him as co-regent his energetic sister Sophia, then aged twenty-four. But the relations of his second wife proclaimed as Tsar his son Peter, then nine years old. The factions continued and Sophia remained in power until Peter attained his seventeenth year; when he succeeded in making good his claim to the throne, and changed the title of Tsar to that of Emperor. The chief object of his life was to make Russia, which he found an Oriental state, European in its civilization. Though he had to contend with great opposition, he succeeded in

everything that he attempted. At the time of his death he had replaced the *Strelsti*, or national guard, by a regular army, composed of infantry and dragoons dressed in European uniform ; had added many fertile countries to his empire ; had facilitated internal communication by high roads and canals ; had created a mercantile navy and founded seaports, thus opening the way to foreign commerce ; and had built St. Petersburg, which he made the seat of government instead of Moscow. His special protection of manufactures, trade, and mining added to the wealth of the country ; so that, in spite of numerous and costly wars, the financial position of Russia was prosperous. With a view of effecting a great reformation in the Church, the supreme spiritual jurisdiction was transferred from the Patriarch to a body called the Holy Synod, of which the Emperor himself was president.

Peter the Great was succeeded by his widow, the Empress Catherine the First (1725–1727); and at her death his grandson, Peter II., ascended the throne (1727–1730). The male line of the Romanofs having become extinct at his death, Anna, daughter of Peter the Great's half-brother Ivan (1730–1740), was chosen to succeed.

Anna had nominated as her successor Ivan, then a child in his cradle, the grandson of her sister Catherine; but in 1741 the infant Emperor was dispossessed,

and Peter the Great's youngest daughter Elizabeth (1741–1762) was elected Empress. The revolution which placed her on the throne was in great measure directed against the German influence which had preponderated during the previous reigns, and her elevation was looked upon as a triumph by the national party. Her nephew Peter III. next ascended the throne, but only to fall a victim within six months to a military conspiracy. These successors of the Great Peter pursued the policy which he had laid down for the guidance of Russia in his will, and, without adding much to the territory of the Empire, preserved its might and dignity.

Peter III. was succeeded by his widow Catherine II., the strong-minded Empress known as Catherine the Great, who reigned from 1762 to 1796, and extended her empire on the east throughout Siberia, and on the west by the acquisition of half of Poland.

She was succeeded by her son Paul, who began his reign by joining in the coalition created by Great Britain against the French Revolutionary party. He was suspected of having secretly entered into an alliance with Napoleon; and, had he lived, he would have probably, in conjunction with him, embarked in the grand scheme which had for its object the total destruction of the English power in India. His murder, on the night of the 23rd November, 1801, broke up the coalition.

Paul's son, Alexander I., now ascended the throne. The earlier years of his reign were spent in wars against France, in which he was repeatedly beaten. But he increased his Empire by the annexation of Finland, East Bosnia, Georgia, and Bessarabia. After Napoleon's unsuccessful invasion of Russia in 1812 he joined the Allies; and in 1815 was confirmed by treaties in the possession of the annexed provinces, and also in his territories in Poland, to which he gave a constitution. During the later years of his life a melancholy mysticism took possession of him; and, under the feeling that he was the victim of ingratitude, he took measures to repress the expression of liberal ideas which his early reforms had encouraged, but with which the Government no longer was in sympathy.

Alexander died at Taganrog in 1825; and as his second brother, Constantine, had already relinquished his claim to the throne, the younger brother, Nicholas, succeeded. A man of iron will, great strength of body, marvellous power of work, and ardent love of military affairs, he was eminently fitted for despotic rule. The early liberalism of his predecessor found scant favour in his eyes. For thirty years he was the determined foe of liberal institutions, and 'the inaugurator of a system of despotism which allowed no vent for public opinion, and which bound a huge nation helplessly under his will and that of his

creatures."[1] At the same time he attempted certain important reforms, notably in collecting materials for the codification of the Law, and in making the tribunals of the country more active and expeditious. The union of the Don with the Volga by a canal, the construction of a railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and the reconstruction of the Winter Palace were the chief public works of his reign. But his foreign policy brought him ultimately into conflict with the allied powers, Great Britain and France. The misfortunes which came upon Russia by the Crimean war broke "the iron Emperor," and he died on the 2nd of March, 1855.

The chief external events of Alexander II.'s reign were the conclusion of the Crimean war, which cost Russia 250,000 men;[2] the Treaty of Paris, by which Russia consented that the Black Sea should be neutral water, open to all merchant ships, but closed to men-of-war of all nations, and that the navigation of the Danube should be free, and also renounced "the exclusive right she had claimed of protection over the Danubian Principalities, and all interference in their internal affairs";[3] the war with Turkey in 1877–78; and a succession of expeditions into Central Asia, which have resulted in the annexation of vast provinces. In 1866, Poland, which had been the scene of a series of insurrections, was divided into

[1] "The Russians of To-day," Introduction, p. xix.
[2] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 380. [3] Ibid., p. 381.

ten provinces, deprived of her national institutions, and, as far as possible, denationalized by the suppression of the Polish language in all State offices and all schools, and by the establishment of the Russian system of education.[1]

The home policy of Alexander was, on the whole, liberal. The work with which his name will be associated is the emancipation of the serfs and the abolition of serfdom. Other important reforms followed: the improvement of the judicial system, the introduction of trial by jury, the mitigation of the censorship of the press, the abolition of corporal punishment in the army and for offences judged by the Imperial tribunals, the improvement of primary education, and the extension of the system of railways and telegraphs which has greatly developed trade; these are some of the civilizing reforms which mark his reign as a new epoch in Russian history.

Simultaneously with the rising in Poland began a restless agitation in Russia for further and rapid reforms, which the Emperor at one time encouraged, at another repressed. This inconsistency served to fan into a blaze the fiery principles of Nihilism, which had long been smouldering, not only among the lower and ignorant, but among the higher and well-educated classes of society. This secret organization boldly advocated the abolition of the

[1] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 406.

Imperial power, and the establishment of a republic, and expressed approval of regicide. Whether the hot-headed youth who in 1866 fired at the Emperor was a Nihilist, seems uncertain; but in 1879 and 1880 no less than three attempts upon his life were made by avowed Nihilists; and though the police were successful in discovering a few of the leading Nihilists, they failed to protect him from their murderous designs, and he fell a victim to their conspiracy on the 13th of March, 1881. He was a great Ruler, and has done as much as Ivan the Great, Peter the Great, and Catherine II., for the civilization of the vast empire which he inherited.

His son and successor, Alexander III., has for many years zealously advocated reform; and if his life be spared, it is possible that a Constitutional form of Government, which has long been under consideration, may be established in his European dominions.

PETER THE GREAT.

CHAPTER II.

THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

Extent — Population — Configuration — Russia in Europe — Rivers — Lakes — Forests — Seasons — Climate — Soil — Products — Manufactures — Locomotion — Population — Nationalities.

THE Russian empire in Europe and Asia combined extends from 38° to 78° north latitude, and from 18° of east to 170° west longitude, and has a total area of 8,444,766 square miles.[1] In the "Almanach de Gotha" the population of the empire is stated to be 88,085,356, which gives an average of rather more than ten individuals to the mile. The greatest breadth of the country from north to south is 2,000 miles; and the extent from Kalisz on the west, along the parallel of 50° 30′ north, to the Pacific Ocean on the east is about 5,300 miles. Exclusive of this territory on the continent, Russia holds Nova Zembla and other islands in the Arctic Ocean, and the Aland Islands in the Baltic. The empire extends over a large portion of the globe, occupying one twenty-sixth part of its superficies and one-seventh of its land.

European Russia occupies an area of 2,200,000

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book," 1880, p. 385.

square miles;[1] and is bounded on the east by Siberia and the Caspian Sea; on the south by Persia, the Black Sea, and the Ottoman empire; on the west by Austria, Prussia, the Baltic, and Sweden; and on the north by Norway and the Arctic Ocean. It is a vast plain, out of which rise the Ural mountains on the east, which separate it from Siberia, and the range of the Caucasus on the south; but the uniformity of the central area is interrupted only by the Valdai hills, of which the average height is 800 to 900 feet, and the highest summit not more than 1,100 feet above the level of the sea. Notwithstanding their insignificant elevation these hills are of great importance to Russia, as constituting the watershed from which rise the rivers that flow northward to the Baltic and the Arctic, and southward to the Caspian and the Black Sea.

The southern portions of the Russian plain suffer as much from the want of water as its northern portions do from its superabundance. Very little rain falls, and the large rivers which flow through the Steppe districts receive scarcely any affluents.

The largest and most important river of European Russia the Volga, with its large tributary the Kama, belongs to the system of the Caspian. This sea is not, however, favourable to navigation, owing to its

[1] Keith Johnson's "Geography," p. 255.

shelving sandy shores, and to the violent storms that vex its surface. The Ural, the Terek, and the Kur also bring to the Caspian a considerable water tribute.

Among the rivers flowing into the Black Sea, one of the chief is the Don, which rises in a marshy district close to the sources of the Oka, in the Government of Tola. Its navigation is much impeded by shifting sand-banks; and it bears with it into the Sea of Azof an immense amount of sand. Polybius 2,000 years ago predicted the ultimate silting up of the Palus Mæotis from this cause.

The Dnieper, the third in rank among European rivers, rises on the southern slope of the Valdai hills, not far from the cradle of the Volga and of the Western Dwina. Rapids and shallows diminish its navigable value, and at its mouth the water of the Black Sea is in summer only about 7 ft. deep.

The Dnieper and the Volga are connected with the Neva by the canals of the Tikvinka and of the Ladoga, so that the Neva is rendered, as it were, their northern mouth. Amongst other rivers of the Black Sea district are the Dniester, the Bug, and the Kuban.

The Baltic receives the Western Dwina, the Neva, the Vistula, and the Niemen. The Dwina rises near the sources of the Volga and of the Dnieper in the Government of Tver, and is connected with the Dnieper by the Beresina Canal. The Neva is the outlet of Lake Ladoga.

Into the Arctic Ocean flow the Northern Dwina, the Mezen, and the Petchora, which rising in the Northern Ural flows through a region of bogs and morasses.

"In Russia," says M. Rambaud,[1] "the rivers are the roads that run, and are the allies of the Russians against what they call their great enemy, space. In a country so extensive and so destitute of sea-board, rivers have an immense importance. It is her water-courses which prevent Russia from being a continent closed and sealed, like Africa or Australia. In place of arms of the sea, she has great rivers which penetrate to her centre, and have sometimes also the proportions of seas. In the level plains they have not the impetuous current of the Rhone; they flow peacefully through great beds cut in the sand or clay. The rivers were, for a long time, the only means of communication." And even now the navigation of the rivers, and the number of steamers that ply on them, continue to increase; and the old-fashioned plan of dragging barges by horse-power is giving place to steam-tugs. The barges vary in size, some being of very large tonnage; and rivers, that in summer-time have not sufficient water to float an ordinary boat, in the spring-time, when the snow melts, carry some of the largest on their stream.[2]

[1] "Hist. of Russia," vol. i. p. 9.
[2] "Russia in Europe in 1870," p. 289.

The freight is very cheap on most of the rivers; for example, "Goods can be sent from the Ural Mountains to Nijni-Novgorod, a distance of 1,330 miles, for 25s. per ton, including all charges for shipment and delivery."[1] On the Volga and the Oka, however, goods are charged an *ad valorem* toll of a half per cent.; and it is probable that this charge may account for the fact that the navigation on them is not as advanced as it ought to be.[2]

The lakes of European Russia, like her rivers, are on a gigantic scale. The largest is Ladoga; Onega, Peipus, Ilmen, and Bielo are also of vast size; and the Provinces of Olmetz and the Duchy of Finland are dotted with numberless smaller sheets of water.

Another distinguishing feature of European Russia is the number and the vastness of her forests, which occur chiefly to the north of Moscow, and cover no less than a third part of the surface of the continent, according to the calculations of Tegoborski. Mr. Carrington writes:[3] "In the Russian landscape one can only get two sorts of view; either one looks out on a vast plain from the edge of a forest, or one regards the edge of a forest from the plain." Of these forests, Volskoniki near the source of the Volga is the largest in extent of any in Europe. In the extreme north the larch alone is to be seen; further

[1] "Russia in Europe in 1870," p. 289. [2] Ibid., p. 290.
[3] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 149.

south are found the pine and the birch; and nearer Moscow the lime, the elm, the sycamore, and the oak all flourish. South of Moscow the vast plains, or *steppes*, are quite free from wood; in the Governments of Astrakhan and Omsk they are, in many parts, mere sandy deserts. Except in the neighbourhood of the mountains, stone is very scarce; and wood formed in old times the main building material for churches as well as houses; so much so that M. Solovief has defined European Russia as the *Europe of Wood* in opposition to the *Europe of Stone*.[1]

In European Russia, which is a continent rather than a country, there is a great contrast between the seasons, and the transition is rapid from severe cold to heat. Spring has hardly any place, and autumn with its clouds and storms is a disagreeable prelude to the cold of winter. The vast plain, of which Russia consists, diversified only by gentle undulations of no great height, is shut out by the Scandinavian mountains from the influence of the Gulf Stream, and deprived besides, by the small extent of its sea-board, of the sea breezes, which so greatly affect the temperature of more western lands; it is, moreover, swept, on the one hand, by Polar winds, whose force is unbroken by any mountain range, and, on the other, by arid blasts from the burning sands of central and southern Asia.

[1] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 8.

Monsieur Leroy-Beaulieu[1] states that in the latitudes of Paris and Venice the countries situated to the north of the Black Sea and the Caspian have, in January, the temperature of Stockholm, and in July that of Madeira. At Astrakhan it is by no means rare for the temperature to vary 130° Fahrenheit in a period of six months. On the coasts of the Caspian, in the latitude of Avignon, the thermometer falls in winter to 22° below zero Fahrenheit, and rises in summer to upwards of 104° Fahrenheit. At St. Petersburg in latitude 59° 56′ the mean annual temperature is 38° Fahrenheit; the mean winter temperature in December, January, and February, being 18° 3′; that of summer, in June, July, and August, 60° 6′. Beyond the 65th degree of latitude the ground is covered with ice and snow for about nine months in the year; so that, speaking generally, the climate of Russia is severe, and cold predominates; and, as the winds lose a great part of their moisture before penetrating so vast a region, the rainfall in the interior is small, and the climate dry.[2]

It is difficult to treat of the soil and its produce in a little space. Monsieur Rambaud[3] divides European Russia into four unequal bands or zones running from the south-west to the north-east.

The most northern he styles the zone of forests—

[1] Quoted by M. Rambaud, vol. i., p. 6.
[2] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 7. [3] Vol. i., p. 14.

the *Poliessa*—which reaches from the frozen marshes, or tundras, of the Arctic coast-lands in the north to the wide-cleared patches of cultivated ground in the provinces of Novgorod, Moscow, and Yaroslaf in the south. Next to this, and extending from the river Pruth to the range of the Caucasus, over an area as large as the whole of France, is the Black land, so called from a deep bed of black soil, which requires no manure, and has from time immemorial been the granary of eastern Europe. Below this zone, parallel to it and descending nearly to the sea, is another huge tract—the arable zone—which in former times presented the appearance of a vast prairie clothed with grass, sometimes from 6 ft. to 8 ft. high. A great portion has now been brought under tillage, and is sufficiently fertile, though not to the degree of being independent of manure. The fourth and most southern zone consists of barren steppes, which are sandy near the mouths of the Dnieper, clayey to the north of the Crimea, and impregnated with salt north of the Caspian. They are unsuited to agriculture, and fitted only to be the grazing-ground of cattle and the home of nomad tribes.

Between these four zones a constant exchange of their natural products is carried on. The forest zone imports the corn of the arable zones and the cattle of the steppes; and the timber from the north finds its way in return to the treeless south.

Rye, barley, oats, and flax constitute the chief crops in the clearings of the forest zone; whilst in the two central zones wheat, hemp, tobacco, beetroot, and grape-vines, are largely cultivated, more than 200,000 acres being devoted to the beetroot crop alone. In no other European country is bee-keeping more attended to than in Russia, and in many districts honey is largely used instead of sugar.

It has been calculated that more that 45 millions of sheep, and at least 20 millions of cattle and horses range over the steppes of the south. Pigs are kept in large numbers all over the country, and their bristles form an article of export.

The reindeer constitute the chief wealth of the Lapps, Samoyedes, and other northern tribes.

The forests and tundras afford a large supply of bears, wolves, foxes, deer, and of other fur-bearing animals. The seas and rivers are rich in fish, amongst which the sturgeon holds the highest place in national estimation; that pre-eminently Russian delicacy, caviare, is made chiefly from the roes of the sturgeon of the Caspian. The Ural and Siberia supply a profusion of metals. Coal is found in the basins of the Donetz and of the Vistula, in the neighbourhood of Moscow, and in the Ural. Salt is obtained in great quantities from the lakes north of the Caspian, and in the Government of Perm. The greatest salt-works in Europe are situated in the western portion

of this latter Government. Naphtha is exported in increasing quantities from the neighbourhood of Baku.

The Governments of Moscow and St. Petersburg are the centres of the manufacturing industries. Here are situated the largest cotton and silk factories.[1] Flax-spinning, and the manufacture of coarse linen, and especially of ropes and sailcloth, is carried on to a very considerable extent not only in the seaport towns but in various inland districts. The most important of the metal industries are the iron-works of Perm in the Ural, of St. Petersburg, and of Poland. The imperial cannon-foundry is at Petrozavodsk, on the western shore of Lake Onega; and at Tola there is an important factory of small arms.

Although it may be true, as Mr. Venables says,[2] that "it will be a very long time before most of the products of Russia can come into competition for finish, durability, or cheapness with English goods," her leather is not only equal but superior to that of other countries.

It is calculated[3] that "agricultural and pastoral industries employ about 76 per cent., manufactures only about 15 per cent." of the population.

It has already been stated that the rivers and the canals by which they are connected are the chief

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[1] Keith Johnson's "Physical, Historical, Political, and Descriptive Geography," 1880, p. 259.

[2] Allan's "Russia," p. 141. [3] Keith Johnson, p. 259.

means of communication throughout Russia. For a long time they were the only means, and locomotion was carried on by boats in summer, and sledges in winter. At the present time these canals and rivers, as well as the great lakes, are, to use M. Rambaud's expression, furrowed by numerous steamboats; but, with the exception of the magnificent highway between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and the road over the Ural mountains, there is almost an absence of good roads in Russia. According to Mr. Wallace, the condition of the ordinary roads is deplorable:[1] "Ruts so deep that when the forewheels can no longer fathom them, it becomes necessary to begin making a new pair of ruts to the right or the left of the old ones, and as the roads are commonly of gigantic breadth, there is no difficulty in finding a place for the operation." The great difficulty in the way of remedying this state of things lies in the fact that it is all but impossible to procure in sufficient quantities stone of any kind.

The popular town vehicle in Russia is the Drosky, which, according to Mr. Wallace, "stands midway between a cab and an instrument of torture," and which Mr. Weir states to be the favourite conveyance of all classes, from the Tsar to the serf.[2] For travelling, the conveyances in use are the "Vasok," a light,

[1] Vol. i., p. 21. [2] "Vacation Rambles," 1861, p. 6.

roomy, partially-covered sledge; the Telega (post-cart without springs), a very primitive conveyance; and the Tarantass, which may be described as a large box on wheels also unprovided with springs.[1]

To travel post in Russia it is necessary to be armed with a Padoroshnaya, a special document stating the number of horses which the traveller is entitled to demand. Along all the chief roads post-houses are situated at intervals of from ten to twenty miles, where horses and vehicles can be obtained, and where the postmaster is bound to supply travellers with a huge steaming tea-urn, called a Samovar, literally "a self-boiler." Experienced travellers always carry with them tea, and make it according to their taste.[2]

In 1689, at the accession of Peter the Great, the population of the whole Russian empire was, in round numbers, 15,000,000;[3] in 1881, it is estimated at 88,085,356.[4] This enormous increase is partly accounted for by the accessions of territory during that period which have swelled the dimensions of the empire. Russia in Europe, including Poland and Finland, has at the present time a population of rather more than 79,000,000; and according to the official Board of Statistics at St. Petersburg,

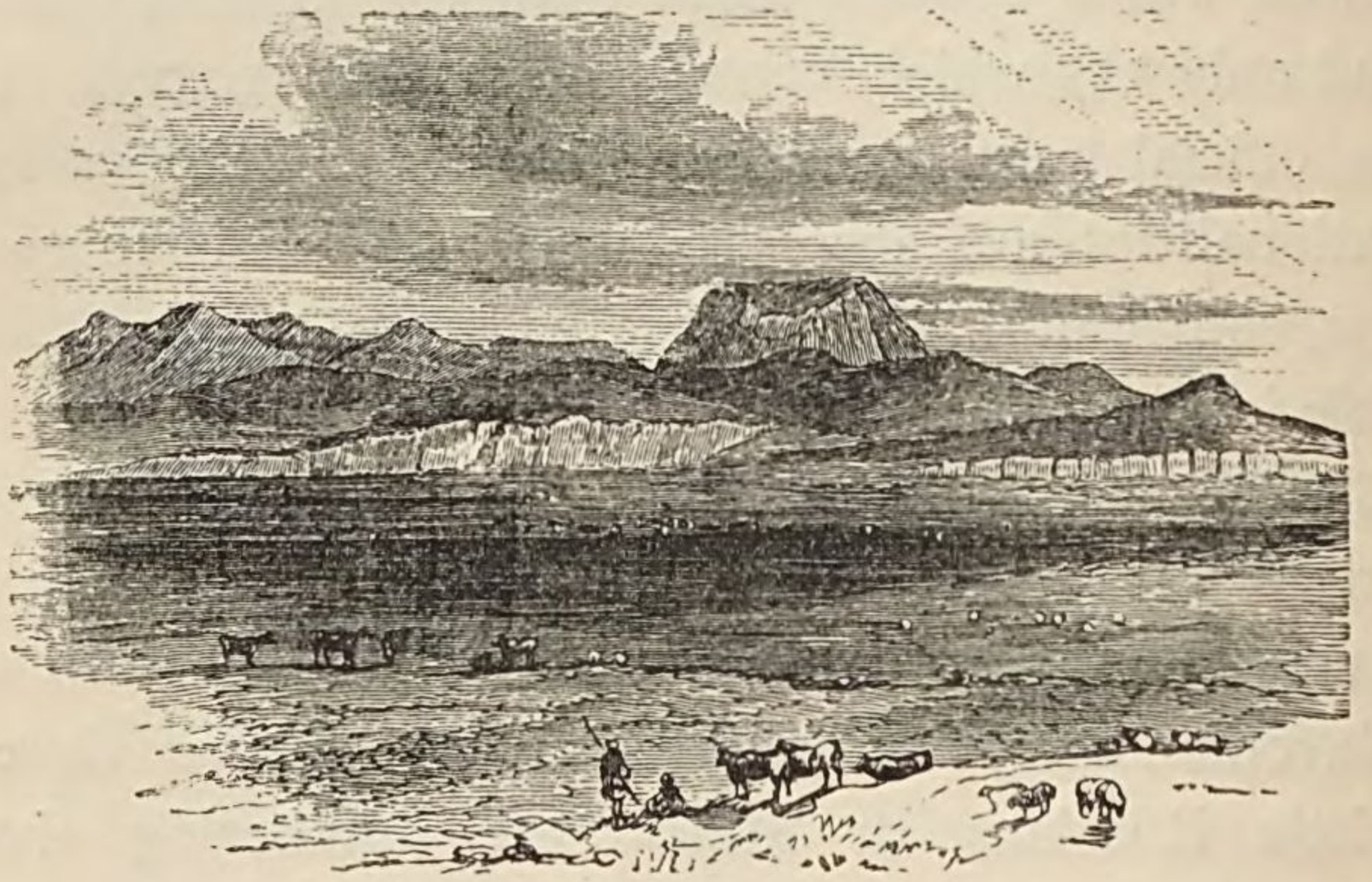
[1] "Vacation Rambles," 1861, p. 6.
[2] Wallace's "Russia," vol. i., p. 19.
[3] McCulloch's "Geographical Dictionary."
[4] "Almanach de Gotha," 1881.

published in 1879, the population shows an average annual increase of 781,000; and, supposing the inhabitants to multiply always at the same rate, would be doubled in fifty-eight years.[1] Mr. Keith Johnson reckons that at *the present date* there are on the average thirty-two people to the square mile.

The large majority of this population dwell in villages thinly scattered over the empire, and follow agricultural occupations; and it is stated[2] that, excluding Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Lithuania, Poland, and the Caucasus, there are only sixteen towns which contain more than 50,000 inhabitants, and only 127 which contain more than 10,000. As no official returns of the numbers of the various nationalities are accessible, any estimate is more or less conjectural. The most accurate that is attainable is given in "The Statesman's Year-Book of 1880": "the population of Russia Proper is comprised of three groups, Great Russians, or Valeko-Russ, numbering 35,000,000, all belonging to the Slavonian race, and occupying the central provinces; Little Russians, or Malo-Russ, numbering about 11,000,000, and comprising the bulk of the population of Poltava, Kharkof, Chernigof, Kief, Volhynia, Podolsk, Ekaterinoslaf, and the Taurida; the White Russians, or Belo-Russ, numbering about

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book." [2] Ibid.

3,000,000, and inhabiting the provinces of Moghilef, Minsk, Vitebsk, and Grodno." Added to these groups of Russians proper are a great variety of national elements: Finns, 3,038,000 in number, who are divided into two groups, western and eastern; the Slavonians of Poland and Lithuania, numbering about 7,000,000: and the Armenians, to the number of about 2,000,000. About 2,000,000 Jews are scattered over the empire; they are most numerous in Poland and in the south-western provinces between that country and the Black Sea.[1]



THE STEPPES.

[1] Keith Johnson's "Geography," p. 257.

CHAPTER III.

THE GOVERNMENT.

Government — Local Administration — Governments — The Zemtsvo—The Mir—The Volost—Judicial Proceedings—Police, Ordinary, Secret — Prisons — The Tchinovniks and Tchins—Serfs — Emancipation — The Nobility — Towns—Merchants, Burghers, Artisans—Army — Navy — Commerce —Exports—Imports—Public Debt—Revenue—Expenditure —Taxation.

THE Government of Russia is an absolute monarchy, which now descends by inheritance, preference being given to male over female heirs; one law being strictly observed that the Tsar, his wife, and children must be members of the orthodox Greek Church. All power is centred in the Emperor, and his will is law. Though he is aided, informed, and counselled by four great Councils, he is free to accept or reject their resolutions, and to decide and act as he shall see fit. The first, the *Council of the Empire*, is divided into three departments, each with its own president and sphere of duties, attending respectively to legislation, the civil administration, and finance, and charged to carry into execution the laws of the Empire, to watch their working, and to propose any necessary alterations. The second

the Directing Senate, established by Peter the Great in 1711, and divided into eight committees, of which five sit at St. Petersburg, and three at Moscow, is the Supreme Court of Justice, to control and to hear appeals from the decisions of the inferior courts; and also the High Committee of Finance, to supervise the revenue and expenditure of the state. The third, the *Holy Synod*, also established by Peter the Great, and composed of the leading Bishops of the Church, is entrusted with the superintendence of the religious affairs of the Empire. The fourth, *the Council of Ministers*, is divided into eleven departments, each with its head, and some also with assistant ministers; namely, the Ministry of the Imperial House, of Foreign Affairs, of War, of the Navy, of the Interior, of Public Instruction, of Finance, of Justice, of the Imperial Domains, of Public Works and Railways, and of General Control. These have power to communicate directly with the Emperor; but ordinarily they approach the Emperor through "*the Private Cabinet*," which is divided into four sections: the first has the presidency and superintendence over the other three, and is in *immediate* communication with the Emperor; the second is the legislative department; the third is specially devoted to the control of the army and secret police; and the fourth to public instruction and ecclesiastical affairs.[1]

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book," p. 368.

For the purposes of local administration, Poland, the Baltic provinces, Finland, and the Caucasus, have each their own form of government, having been allowed to retain as many of their own laws and institutions as were not at variance with the general principles of the laws of the Empire. The remainder of European Russia is divided into forty-six *Governments*, varying considerably in size and population; each of these is subdivided into districts, also varying in size; the number of the districts is 320. Over each Government is placed a governor, who is the representative of the Emperor, and has the general control of all affairs, whether civil or military, and is assisted by a vice-governor and by a small council for the purposes of finance. In each district is a local organ of self-government, instituted by the law of 1864, and called the *Zemtsvo;* a council which is composed of deputies, elected every three years in certain fixed proportions from the landed proprietors, the rural communes, and the towns. The functions of the Zemtsvo consist in the election of the justices of the peace, in the regulation of the police, the repair of roads and bridges, the promotion of education, the introduction of sanitary arrangements, and the provision against famine, and generally in undertakings for promoting the material and moral well-being of the people. In each Government is the *Goubernkoé Zemtsvo*, or

general council, elected by the district councils, which has authority over matters concerning the districts collectively, and votes the provincial budget. In these general councils the landowners preponderate, owing to the aversion of the peasants to fill any sort of public position.[1]

To complete the system of local self-government, and to carry it down to the peasant class, each district is subdivided into communes, called *Mir ;* and these communes are, again, united together into a *Volost*, that embraces a population of 1,000. The affairs of the Mir are managed by an assembly, consisting of heads of houses elected by ballot, one deputy being elected by every five houses ; and presided over by an elder, called *Starosta*, who is appointed by the deputies, and acts as speaker in their meetings and as executive officer to carry out their resolutions, but has no independent authority. The Imperial Government has given new powers and force to an old-existing Slav institution. No written code of laws for the guidance of the *Starosta* or of the meetings exist ; old custom determines the course of procedure. The entire management of the affairs of the village rests with this assembly, which fixes the date of commencing all harvest-works, such as ploughing, sowing, reaping, and mowing ; and divides

[1] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 397.

the arable and pasturage lands in proportion among the householders, in some parts giving to each family a number of shares, corresponding to the number of souls; in others, allotting them according to the working power of the families. No one can leave the village without the permission of the assembly, nor without an undertaking to pay in his absence his share of the Imperial taxes; nor can a final distribution of the lands of the commune be legally made without the consent of two-thirds of those interested in it. As an idle, profligate, or drunken householder is an injury to the whole community, the assembly determines what shall be done with him and with his share of the common lands, in order that an undue proportion of the taxes may not fall on the industrious and well-conditioned inhabitants. After exhausting all other means of correcting him, the assembly has the power of turning him out of the commune; and if another commune does not admit him, the discharged member is sent, at the cost of the Government, with others of the same kind, to found a colony, and in time a commune, elsewhere.[1] In conjunction with the assembly in every village are two elected members, called *conscience people*, who, with the *Starosta*, have jurisdiction in trivial disputes about property, where not more than five roubles are

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 13.

involved, and in injuries and offences of every kind. Mr. Wallace[1] makes a startling statement, in which he is supported by Mr. Dixon,[2] but contradicted by Mr. Herbert Barry, "that the Mir may, by a communal decree, and without a formal trial, have any of its unruly members transported to Siberia"; and "that this summary informal way of procedure seems to the peasants very satisfactory."

The *Volost* assembly is composed of peasant delegates from the communal assemblies, in the proportion of one for every ten houses. It is presided over by an officer called *Starchina*, and is charged to watch over the common interests of all the villages under its jurisdiction. This elected assembly elects the Volost court of justice, the members of which vary in number from three to twelve, three of whom are bound to sit with the Starchina. This Court tries cases of a somewhat more important character than the Mir tribunal tries. It has jurisdiction in civil cases where not more than one hundred roubles are in dispute; and has the power in criminal cases to inflict a fine of not more three silver roubles, to inflict twenty-four blows with the rod, and to send to prison for seven days.[3] It also receives appeals from the communal courts in certain cases.[4] Mr. Herbert

[1] Vol. ii., p. 407.
[2] "Free Russia: Village Republics."
[3] "Russia in 1870," p. 12. [4] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 394.

Barry says,[1] "the Starchina's position is not a comfortable one. In his town-hall or 'volost,' as it is called, he is the executor of the commands received from the Ispravnik, or local chief of police. He must also carry out the orders received from the local arbitrators of peace. For these purposes he has 'sotskys' or policemen under him; these men are the village peasants drawn by lot, and their uniform consists of a brass badge and a walking-stick. He must also collect the town-taxes, see that the Starosta, or head man of the village, collects the lord's obrok or land-tax, and must levy on the goods and chattels of the peasant if this be not paid. It can be easily understood that the position of the Starchina is not coveted by the Russians; the man gets into hot water with everybody. As a result, he retires from his office at the end of his term with the bad will of all, and generally minus the little money he had scraped together before he received his local rank." By this enlargement of the powers of the Mir, and by the Volost, the Russian peasants have a system of local self-government.[2]

Previously to the year 1864, the judicial proceedings of the Empire were most unsatisfactory and corrupt, and the old law most voluminous and complicated. Three years and a half after the emancipa-

[1] "Ivan at Home," p. 58.

[2] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 394.

tion of the serfs Russia was freed from these judicial burdens; and the legal procedure was remodelled on a simple and symmetrical system, mainly in accordance with the ideas of France, although the influence of the English system is here and there apparent. Instead of the old proceedings in private sittings and by written forms, *public* hearings and trial by jury are established, the jurors being elected from all classes, the judges well paid and independent, and the superior judges immovable.[1]

The proceedings are carried on in two divisions of courts; the Justice of Peace courts, and the Regular Tribunals; each independent of the other, and each consisting of an ordinary court and a court of appeal.

A Court of Justice is appointed in every district, to which a paid justice is elected by the inhabitants and landowners of the district for a period of three years only; but he is eligible for re-election at the end of that period. The court can decide civil cases in which not more than 500 roubles are involved, and criminal cases where the penalty does not exceed 300 roubles or a year's imprisonment. There is no appeal from a decision that inflicts a fine of fifteen

[1] This description is compiled mainly from the works of Mons. Rambaud, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Herbert Barry.

roubles or imprisonment of three days. But in all other cases an appeal lies to the assembly of the justices of the peace, "a court that may be compared to our quarter sessions,"[1] elected by the landed proprietors. Its decision in most cases is final, but in some few it is subject to an appeal to the Senate.[2]

The regular tribunals have cognizance of weightier and more important matters, arising from differences in families or between individuals, or concerning the public peace. The judges are trained jurists, and are appointed by the Tsar. The suit is heard in the first instance before the Circuit Court, in which the judges have for an assessor a subordinate of the Minister of Justice, called the Procureur General ; whose duty it is "to preserve the force of the law, to detect and repair all infractions of judicial order, to defend the interests of the state and of those persons who are officially recognized as incapable of taking charge of their own affairs, and to act in criminal matters as Public Prosecutor";[3] and further "to express to the judges his view of the case ; and particularly to point out and explain to the court the particular statutes which bear upon the case";[4] but he is forbidden to take part in the decision, which rests with the judges themselves.

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[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 89.
[2] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 396.
[3] Wallace, vol. ii., p. 393.
[4] "Russia in 1870," p. 9.

From this Court an appeal lies first to the High Court of Justice, and then to a special Court of the Senate; but neither of these Courts enters into the merits of a case, nor inquires into anything except the strict legality of the proceedings in the lower courts, to which, if necessary, the case is returned to be tried afresh.

Though the peasants retain corporal punishment in their village courts, it has been abolished in the higher courts as well as in the army and navy.

The instrument of the law to which the most evil name is attached, and which is most dreaded and hated in Russia, is the Police, "which forms a real part of the executive of the country."[1] Of the High or Secret Police little but its existence can be accurately known; for, as Mr. Sutherland Edwards says, "if every one knew all about it, it would not be secret." It is the third division of the Imperial Chancellerie, and the executive to carry out the orders of the Chancellerie. Since the year 1864 it has confined its operations to political matters without interfering in ordinary criminal affairs. But, though the management of this instrument of Government has been improved, suspicion and terror speak of it as still acting the spy not only in Russia, but in all other countries where

[1] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 204.

Russians congregate; and as chronicling the conduct and antecedents of all who may, by position or from their opinions, be dangerous to the Tsar or the Empire.

The ordinary police are divided into town and rural. In the towns the policemen are generally old soldiers, attired in a sort of military uniform with swords like the French gendarmerie, and living in small huts in the streets under their charge. They are under the control of the Head Police Master, who has two assistants, and presides over a daily police-court, where business of a very mixed character is transacted. Mr. Carrington gives a graphic description[1] of the multifarious duties of the police, over and above the prevention of crime, the preservation of peace, and the cleansing of the streets; "they have almost the exclusive control of the passport and licensing systems, and are mixed up in some mysterious way with almost all the pursuits of public and private life. At every town in Russia one is brought up, or otherwise annoyed, by police regulations. In entering or leaving the country, in sending or losing letters or parcels, in buying and selling, in walking, riding, driving, or stopping at home, and on every possible pretext and occasion, one is liable to police interference of some sort or other. In

[1] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 204.

changing from one town to another, one must visit the police; in changing lodgings in the same town; one must have permission from the police to hire oneself as a servant in any capacity, or as a tutor to give lessons. The Russians are nearly as badly off in this respect as foreigners."

The rural police are simply village peasants, two of whom are elected by each commune, and carry a brass badge and a walking-stick. Like the town police they have many duties beyond keeping the peace. In each of the forty-six governments there is a head, called *Ispravniki*, generally a retired officer of the rank of colonel, and two *Stanovoys*, elected from the Tchinovniks in the towns of the government. "The work which these men have to do is enormous; they are not only the guardians of the general peace, but are the executors of the decisions of all the courts, as well as of the orders of the Governor and of the ukases of the Emperor. In point of fact, they carry out all the Government business in their district, not forgetting the important duty of seeing to the collection of the Government taxes."[1] In the Volosts they have the Starchina, and in the Mir the Starosta, to carry out the commands which they receive from the Governor or the courts.

There is in every town of any importance a prison.

[1] "Ivan at Home," p. 264.

Prisoners for minor offences are kept in large wards used for sleeping as well as working; those guilty of greater crimes are shut up in cells, by twos and threes, the "secrets," or worst criminals alone, being in solitary confinement. "Nobility" obtains the privilege of dispensing with the prison dress. The women's wards are separate from those of the men.[1]

It will be seen from the foregoing account that a multitude of officials is necessitated by the various offices to be fulfilled and the duties to be performed. These, drawn mostly from the noblesse and the clergy, form a class of society called Tchinovniks, or men with Tchin. Peter the Great distributed the officers of the State among the fourteen ranks of the Tchin, and assigned to each rank a particular name, which marks the offices that the holder of the rank is competent to fill. No one can hold a Government appointment unless he has a Tchin; and those who enter the public service are compelled, whatever be their social condition, to enter in the lowest rank, and to work their way to the higher, remaining a certain fixed period in each step. An educational certificate or the will of the Emperor may relieve from the necessity of passing through the lowest ranks.[2]

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[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 164.

[2] Mr. Wallace and M. Rambaud.

Up to the year 1858, 47,100,000 individuals, or more than half of the population of European Russia, were serfs. Of these, according to M. Rambaud,[1] 20,000,000 were Crown peasants, 4,700,000 were peasants attached to estates which were the appanage of the Crown, to the mines, and to the Crown factories; 21,000,000 belonged to private individuals, and 1,400,000 were domestic servants. The serfs of the Crown and of the Appanages might be considered as free men, subject to the payment of a rent, and bound merely to discharge certain clearly-defined obligations towards the State. The Crown peasants even enjoyed a certain amount of local self-government. In the scheme of emancipation all that was necessary in their case was to declare their persons free and to remove certain restrictions on their rights of locomotion and of acquiring and disposing of real and personal property. This was done by a series of ukases, of which the first bore the date of July, 1858.

The case of the serfs belonging to private owners and of the domestic servants was very different. "The emancipation of these 22,500,000 human beings was to constitute the most prodigious social revolution that had been accomplished in Europe since the French Revolution."[2] The task was beset with diffi-

[1] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 385. [2] Ibid., p. 392.

culties, since the serfs were not merely to be declared free, but were, under certain conditions, to remain in possession of a portion of the soil which they had hitherto cultivated.

After long deliberation the new law was settled, and was announced by the manifesto of March, 1861, of which the main principles may, according to M. Rambaud, be formulated as follows :—

1. The peasants hitherto attached to the soil were to be invested with all the rights of free cultivators.

2. The peasants were to obtain, on certain conditions fixed by the law, the full enjoyment of their enclosure (*dvor*) and of a portion of arable land sufficient to enable them to discharge their obligations to the state. This "permanent enjoyment" could be converted into "absolute possession" of the enclosure and the lands by the exercise of a right of purchase.

3. The lords were to yield up to the peasants or to the rural communes the land actually occupied by them, a maximum and a minimum being fixed for each district ; the *average* grant was about nine acres English for every male peasant ; but the quantity varied in different districts, speaking roughly, from two acres and three quarters to twenty-five acres, according to the quality of the soil.

4. The Government was bound to organize a

system of loans, to enable the peasants to discharge their obligations to their lords and to remain debtors merely to the State.

5. The domestic servants were to receive their personal liberty on condition of their serving their masters for the space of two more years.

6. The temporary magistracy of the *Mirovyé posrédniki*, or mediators of peace, was established to settle the various difficult points connected with the partition of the land, the amount of compensation to be granted to the lords of the lands, the conditions of purchase, and other kindred matters. And a great part of the honour of the pacific settlement of the emancipation must be credited to these officials.

The owners of the serfs received compensation for the land thus yielded up and for the loss of serf-labour by a money payment, based on the rents which they had received, and on the amount of labour which had been rendered to them, and calculated at a yearly rental of six per cent.; "so that, for every six roubles which the labourer had earned annually, he had to pay one hundred roubles to his master as his capital value to become a freeholder." Of this sum, twenty per cent. was provided immediately by the serf; and the remainder, eighty per cent., was advanced by the Government to the owners, to be repaid by the freed peasants by instalments extending over forty-nine years. To secure this repay-

ment the Government turned to account the old existing Slav institution, the *Mir* or Commune; and made all the householders of a village collectively and individually responsible for the entire sum, by charging on each commune a portion of the redemption dues and other imperial taxes proportionate to the number of males in the census-list which is revised and republished from time to time.

With regard to the highest class in Russia, it has often been said that, though princes abound, there is no such thing as an aristocracy; and it is undoubtedly true that the Russian *dvoryanstvo* bears but little real similarity to the English nobility, to the French noblesse, or to the German adel. In olden times, no doubt, the Boyards were the brothers in arms and the by no means subservient companions of their princes, whose affairs, both public and private, they considered themselves entitled to direct and often to control. During the period of the Tartar domination, and still more so after the establishment of the Tsardom at Moscow, the relations which had subsisted between the prince and his nobles became greatly modified; until, at last, the courtiers of the Russian Tsar were reduced pretty much to the condition of those of an Oriental despot.

After the accession of the Romanof dynasty the position of the nobles improved somewhat; but

under the autocratic reformer, Peter the Great, "the whole legal status of the noblesse was," says Mr. Wallace, "entirely changed, and the principle was laid down that all nobles, whatever their landed possessions might be, should serve the State in the army, the fleet, or the civil administration from boyhood to old age."[1] "These two ideas, the service of the Tsar, and nobility, became correlative. Every noble was bound to serve, and whosoever entered the service, were he a Russian or a stranger, became noble."[2]

Under the succeeding reigns the severity of this system was relaxed; but even under Catherine II., who strove by every means to attach the nobles to her service, and who, says Mr. Wallace, "shared the idea that a refined, pomp-loving, pleasure-seeking Court noblesse was not only the best bulwark of monarchy, but also a necessary ornament of every highly-civilized State"; nobles who had not obtained military rank were deprived of the right of voting in the "assembly of the nobles," and were mulcted of certain prerogatives belonging to their order.[3] A comedy of the period[4] says that, "not only landed proprietors, but all men, even shopkeepers and cobblers, aim at becoming officers, and the man who

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[1] Wallace's "Russia," vol. i., p. 418.
[2] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 25. [3] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 114.
[4] Quoted by Wallace, vol. i., p. 422.

has passed his whole life without official rank seems not to be a human being." Under such circumstances it is not to be wondered at, that the possession of a long pedigree and of distinguished ancestors came to be looked upon as but of little value, in comparison with the more substantial advantages conferred by the favour of the Sovereign and by a high official position.

Paul I.'s well-known speech to Dumouriez,[1] "Know that the only person of consideration in Russia is the person to whom I am speaking, and for the time that I am speaking to him," represented probably not only his own sentiments, but the opinion of the bulk of the nation, on pretentions to aristocracy. Formerly the nobility were distinguished from other classes by the privilege of holding "inhabited estates," that is to say, estates furnished with serfs. The Emancipation Act has abolished this privilege, and has placed the nobles of the present day "on a level with the other classes with regard to the right of possessing landed property and the administration of local affairs."[2] "In reality," says a recent writer,[3] "Russia is now a democratic country,

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[1] "Apprenez qu'il n'y a personne de considérable en Russie que l'homme auquel j'adresse la parole, et pendant le temps que je lui parle." Quoted by Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 183.

[2] Wallace, vol. i., p. 428.

[3] "Russia and England," by O. K., p. 232.

and a House of Lords in Russia would be a very ridiculous innovation."

Mr. Wallace,[1] who has a better knowledge of Russian society than any other living author, states that "if the term aristocracy is to be used at all, it must be applied to a group of families which cluster around the Court, and form the highest ranks of the noblesse. This social aristocracy contains many old families; but its real basis is official rank and general culture, rather than pedigree or blood. . . . It takes rather the English aristocracy as its model, and harbours the secret hope of one day obtaining a social and political position, similar to that of the nobility and gentry of England. Though it has no peculiar legal privileges, its actual position in the administration and at Court gives its members great facilities for advancement in the public service. On the other hand, its semi-bureaucratic character, together with the law and custom of dividing landed property among the children at the death of their parents, deprives it of stability. New men force their way into it by official distinction, whilst many of the old families are compelled by poverty to retire from its ranks." Titles are common, because the children of titled families bear the title during the lifetime of their parents; but they are not valued as highly as in

[1] Vol. i., p. 431.

the rest of Europe. Prince is the genuine old Russian title; "it is borne by the descendants of Rurik, of the Lithuanian Prince Ghedimin and of the Tartar Khans and Murzi officially recognized by the Tsars," and "by fourteen families who have adopted it by Imperial command during the last two centuries."[1] But the title does not necessarily admit to the social aristocracy; and Mr. Wallace states that "there are hundreds of princes and princesses who have no right to appear at Court, and who would not be admitted into what is called in St. Petersburg *la Société, or, indeed, into refined society in any country.*" The number of these hereditary nobles was estimated in 1875 at 652,887, and the number of personal nobles at 374,367.[2]

It has already been stated that there are very few towns or cities in European Russia which contain more than 10,000 inhabitants; and Mr. Wallace[3] informs us that only one-tenth of the population are dwellers in towns. To this fact may be attributed the want of a rich and intelligent middle-class, which sovereign after sovereign has attempted to create, but with comparatively little success. Towns, municipal institutions, guilds, corporations, and other kindred associations have not been the outcome of the natural tendencies

[1] Wallace, vol. i., p. 432.
[2] See Wallace, vol. i., p. 437.
[3] Vol. i., p. 254–255.

and wants of the people, but have been forced on them by the Government, and have been, in many cases, made obligatory by most severe penalties. Thus, under the laws of Alexis, the father of Peter the Great, those who fled from a town from dislike of these legislative enactments were brought back as runaways, and a second attempt at flight was punished by flogging or by transportation to Siberia.[1]

Peter the Great began to re-organize the administration of the towns after the model of the ancient free cities of Germany; and Catherine II. granted to the towns charters, which remained without any essential modification down to the beginning of the reign of the late Tsar. But the result has not been proportionate to the wishes or the endeavours of the Government; and the chief practical result has been that the inhabitants of the towns have been grouped into a system of classes for the purposes of taxation, and that the taxes have been increased. The population may be said to be divided into three groups, the merchants, the burghers, and the artisans; each group forming a distinct corporation, and each having a peculiar organization, and peculiar privileges and obligations.[2] The qualification of a merchant is a certain amount of capital, and the inscription of his name in one of the three guilds into which his

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[1] "Wallace," vol. i., p. 259.

[2] Ibid., vol. i., p. 264.

capital qualifies him for admission. As soon as a merchant leaves the guild, or fails to pay for the yearly licence, he ceases to be a merchant, and returns to the class to which he originally belonged. The artisan is enrolled in a corporation or *Tsekh*, according to his trade and handicraft, which, like the Guilds of the Merchants, has an elected chief officer, and an elected council, to regulate all matters connected with their respective callings. The burghers are all the registered inhabitants of the towns, who do not belong to any guild of the merchants or the artisans; they are a separate corporation with a chief officer and a council. And, according to Mr. Wallace,[1] in European Russia, the merchants, including wives and children, number about 466,000, the burghers about 4,033,000, and the artisans about 260,000.

MICHAEL ROMANOF.

[1] "The Russians of To-day," vol. i., p. 266.

CHAPTER IV.

The Army—The Navy—The Finances—Commerce—Railways —Post Office—Telegraph.

ON the first day of January, 1874,[1] the Emperor by a ukase sanctioned the new regulation for military service, which had been prepared under an order issued in 1870; and, further, commanded that it should be enforced throughout the empire and the kingdom of Poland. The whole male population, without any distinction of class, is now liable to military service, and the old practice of purchasing exemption, or of obtaining a substitute, is forbidden. The army consists of the regular forces, and the militia; but the services of the militia are required only in time of war, when there is a special necessity to call it out. The regular forces are made up of the Active Army, which is recruited by yearly levies taken throughout the empire, up to the strength fixed by the legislature every year; the Reserve,

[1] These details are extracted from "the New Law regulating Military Service in Russia," translated in the intelligence branch of the Quartermaster-General's Department, Horse-guards, London.

from which regiments, falling short of their effective strength, are filled up, and which is composed of men who have served a stated period in the active army, and are allowed to remain on furlough until the time of their service expires; and of the Cossacks and of regiments composed of foreign tribes.

The admission to the service is decided by drawing of lots, in which every male person must once in his lifetime take part. The drawing takes place annually; and every male, who on the 1st of January in each year has completed twenty years of age, is compelled to be present at the levy, and to take part in the drawing, unless he has qualified himself for exemption by the fulfilment of conditions that will be hereafter stated. When the number required to complete the strength of the army, and of the navy, as fixed by the legislature, has been drawn, the others present at the levy are enrolled in the militia.

The period of service is fixed at fifteen years, of which six are spent in the active army, and nine in the reserve; but in time of war this regulation is set aside, and the men are obliged to remain with the colours as long as the State has need of them. It is only in cases of absolute necessity that men of the reserve are called up into the active army; but the Minister of War has power to order them out for drill, for not more than six weeks, and not oftener than twice during the nine years. Exemption from

taxation is granted during the whole period of active service, and during the first year of the reserve.

The militia is made up of all men, outside the standing army and navy, between the ages of twenty and forty, who are capable of bearing arms, inclusive of those men who have been released from the reserve; persons over the age of forty may enrol themselves, if they please. If the number of men in the reserve is not sufficient to fill up the effective strength of the active army, draughts are made from the men who were enrolled in the militia during the last four levies made. As the militia can be called out only in time of war, it is disbanded as soon as the war is over, or at an earlier date if the need of its services should cease.

Exemptions from service are allowed to persons physically unfit, and to others for family reasons; as, for example, to the only son of an incapacitated father, or of a widow. Postponement of entrance into the service on the ground of education is granted, for periods varying in length, to students at certain specified places of education; and a reduction in the length of service is made to men who have completed a prescribed course of study at the Universities and other educational establishments. There is a further provision, which, as Monsieur Rambaud observes, "preserves a law of social equality, and offers a premium on education." Young men, who have passed

examinations at certain educational establishments may, at the age of seventeen years, voluntarily enlist, and serve in the active army for a period varying from three months to two years, according as they have received a more or less advanced education; after fulfilling the obligations of private soldiers for their allotted period, they may either pass, in peace time, into the reserve, unless they have attained the rank of commissioned or non-commissioned officers, or may undergo an officer's examination, and become officers either of the active army or of the reserve.[1]

The active army is divided into nineteen army corps, one of the guards, one of the grenadiers, fifteen of the line, and two of the Caucasus. Each army corps contains two or three divisions of infantry, one division of cavalry, two or three brigades of artillery, and two batteries of horse artillery. The army corps of the Guards has two divisions of cavalry in peace, and three in time of war, and six brigades of artillery. The nineteen army corps thus comprise forty-four divisions of infantry, nineteen (and in time of war twenty) divisions of cavalry, forty-four brigades of artillery, and thirty-four batteries of

[1] It has not been deemed necessary to mention the localities and the portions of the population, which are temporarily or wholly, or in part, exempted from the operation of this regulation.

horse artillery. To these must be added four divisions of infantry, one of cavalry, seven brigades and one battery of artillery, and one battery of horse artillery, which have not been as yet brought into organization. So that there are in all forty-eight divisions of infantry, twenty (and in case of war, twenty-one) divisions of cavalry, fifty-one brigades and one battery of artillery, and thirty-five batteries of horse-artillery. Each of the forty-eight divisions of infantry consists of four regiments, making 192 regiments in all; each regiment of four battalions, three of the line, and one of rifles; and each battalion of four companies. The cavalry is made up of seventy-seven regiments, four of cuirassiers, twenty of dragoons, sixteen of lancers, sixteen of hussars, and twenty-one regiments and one squadron of Cossacks. The artillery consists of 334 batteries, with, in time of peace, 1,406 cannons, and in time of war 10,602 cannons. And there are 28¼ battalions of engineers.

The reserve has, in time of peace, 97 battalions of infantry, and 36 batteries of artillery, with 144 guns; and in time of war 388 battalions of infantry, and 96 batteries of artillery with 768 guns.

Added to these are garrison troops, whose work it is to instruct recruits, and to drill the men on furlough and in the reserve; local troops, in the Caucasus, Orenburg, Siberia, and Turkestan; and the troops of instruction. These make up a total, in time

of peace, of $73\frac{3}{4}$ battalions of infantry and artillery, 56 squadrons of cavalry, and two batteries of artillery with 12 guns; and in time of war, of 378 battalions of infantry, artillery, and engineers, 56 squadrons of cavalry, and 51 batteries of artillery with 402 guns.

The irregular troops are composed of the Cossacks. By the Imperial decrees 1874, 1875, and 1876, every Cossack of the Don, of the Ural, and of Orenburg is bound to render military service, without power to obtain exemption either by purchase or by substitution. The period of service is twenty years; of which three are spent in preliminary instruction, commencing at seventeen years of age; twelve in active service; and five on duty in the interior. During this period they are reckoned to be in the Woissko; and at the expiration they pass for five years into the Woissko-Opoltchenie, or reserve, which is never called out in time of peace except under circumstances of the greatest urgency.

There are six other Woisskos besides those of the Don, of the Ural, and of Orenburg,—those, namely, of the Kuban, the Terek, Astrakhan, Siberia, Transbaikale, and the Amoor; and the Cossacks forming these are under the old regulations, which bind the different hordes to provide a certain number of regiments of a specified strength, at ten days' notice. These troops find their own equipments, clothes, arms, and forage, and to receive neither pay nor rations unless they are taken beyond their own frontiers. The

Woissko of the Kuban furnishes a squadron of picked men for the Emperor's escort in time of war; the Woissko of the Terek furnishes a squadron of escort in time of peace; an honour which is shared by the Tartars of the Crimea.

The troops composed of foreign tribes exist only in the Crimea and the country of the Bachksir, where the Tartars and the Bachksir are formed into squadrons of cavalry, and provide their own horses and equipments.

Finland had a military system of its own, by which each district into which it was divided was obliged to furnish and to pay a certain number of men, whose material wants alone the State supplied. But by a law which came into force on the 1st of January, 1881, every male is now made liable to military service, and the requisite levy is made by drawing of lots. The Finland troops will, for the future, form eight battalions of rifles, each consisting of eighteen officers, fourteen *employés*, and 505 men; in all, 4,296.

The following tables give the total strength of the Russian army:—

THE REGULAR ARMY.

	Peace Footing.		War Footing.	
	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.
Infantry ...	623,981	10,985	1,800,710	31,540
Cavalry ...	85,860	61,727	94,666	93,440
Artillery ...	108,610	21,252	210,772	118,300
Engineers	20,624	661	43,352	14,020
	839,075	94,625	2,149,300	257,300

THE IRREGULAR ARMY.

	Peace Footing.		War Footing.	
	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.
Infantry ...	... 6,500	... —	... 8,510	... —
Cavalry ...	... 34,196	... 32,754	... 142,400	... 128,810
Artillery ...	... 2,912	... 1,989	... 12,650	... 11,440
	43,608	34,743	163,560	140,250[1]

To these must be added the Staff, consisting of 5,452 men and 654 horses; the establishments of instruction, the local detachments of the Artillery and the Engineers, the Gendarmerie, the Custom-house officers, &c., numbering in time of peace alone 85,000, and in time of war about 100,000; and the militia called out in time of war, about 200,000. So that the grand total of the peace establishment may be set at 973,135, and of the war at 2,618,312 men.

The estimate for the maintenance of the Army of the Empire and of the Kingdom of Poland, in the Budget for 1880, was 189,669,862 roubles; and of the Government of Finland 2,513,630 marcs; or, reckoning the rouble at 2s. 8d. and the marc at twenty-five to the pound sterling, £25,390,000.

The Navy is manned by an annual levy and lot-drawing that corresponds in the main with the levy

[1] These details have been taken mainly from the "Almanach de Gotha," 1881.

and lot-drawing for the army; the age of admission being the same, namely, twenty years; and the number of men required to complete the strength of the marine being fixed by the Legislature. The Navy is divided into the Fleet and the Reserve, and the duration of service is fixed at ten years, of which seven are in the Fleet and three in the Reserve. Finland furnishes annually 100 sailors, over and above 787 pilots, who are employed on 107 stations and in sixteen lighthouses.

The Fleet is formed into two divisions, the Fleet of the Baltic and the Fleet of the Black Sea; each of these is sub-divided into sections, the Baltic into three, and the Black Sea into two. There are also armed steamers on the Caspian Sea and on the Sea of Aral. In 1880 the number of sailors was 26,153, and of officers 4,041.

THE FLEET, IN 1880, CONSISTED OF THE FOLLOWING VESSELS:[1]—

1. In the Baltic—	No.	Guns.	Tonnage.	H.P.
Ironclad steamers	24	273	200,000	30,000
Armed steamers, including torpedo boats	145	360		
Steam transports	85	—		
2. In the Black Sea—				
Ironclad steamers	4	18	30,000	10,515
Armed steamers, including the "Livadia" ...	25	92		
Unarmed steamers ...	58	—		

[1] "Almanach de Gotha," 1881.

	No.	Guns.	Tonnage.	H.P.
3. In the Caspian—				
Armed steamers	13 ...	37		
Unarmed steamers... ...	4 ...	—	3,686 ...	353
4. In the Sea of Aral—				
Armed steamers	6 ...	13 ...	1,180 ...	217
5. In Siberia—				
Armed steamers	10 ...	43		
Unarmed steamers... ...	15 ...	—	9,000 ...	1,725
	389 ...	836 ...	243,866 ...	42,810

It is stated in the *Edinburgh Review* of January, 1881, that the number of armoured vessels on the list is twenty-nine, one more than in the preceding list; and that of these not more than five, at the outside, can be considered "sea-going."[1] The most powerful, "Peter the Great," with armour at its greatest thickness of 14 inches, and four steel guns of 40 tons each, has never sailed far from Cronstadt. Of the armour class, two are *belted* cruisers, "having a belt of armour along the water line, and a *barbette* battery amidships," and others are "Popoffkas," or circular ships, intended for harbour defence. Mr. King[2] states: "Within the last few years the fast cruising fleet has been very largely augmented, until it has now attained proportions sufficient to excite the jealous interest of the maritime Powers of Europe." The vessels of this fleet are not armour-

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, No. 313, January, 1881, p. 42.
[2] Quoted in *Edinburgh Review*, p. 44.

clad, and are armed with long breech-loading guns. And, in addition to the torpedo-boats, there are gun-boats of light draught, each carrying an eleven-inch gun. Since 1875 not a single armour-clad has been commenced.[1]

The estimate in the Budget of 1880 for the maintenance of the navy was 28,546,994 roubles, or £3,810,432.

The public debt of Russia, as set down in the "Almanach de Gotha" of 1881, is nearly £360,000,000.[2] But this does not appear to include the debt represented by paper money of fixed currency, which, in September, 1879, was estimated at £162,000,000.[3] The interest on the debt, in the Budget for 1880, was nearly £23,000,000 sterling.

The sources of revenue, and the amount in the year 1879, are set down in the following table :—

	Roubles.
1. Ordinary Revenue :—	
Direct taxes	133,267,237
Indirect taxes	354,560,497
Mint, post and telegraphs	24,292,270
State domains	27,878,865
Miscellaneous receipts	47,561,940
Revenue of Transcaucasus	7,900,915
	595,461,724
2. Recettes d'Ordre	24,136,218

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, p. 44. [2] "Almanach de Gotha."
[3] The "Statesman's Year-Book," 1880.

	Roubles.
3. Extraordinary receipts	9,367,766
Total revenue	628,965,708
Or	£89,852,244

"The Direct Taxes consist chiefly of imposts on land, levied from the peasantry." These are exceedingly high, and press most severely on the peasant. They include the Imperial Taxes, fixed by the State; Local, by the Zemtsvo, and Communal, by the Commune; and "amount to about nine roubles and a half per male; so that, if we take two and a half as the average number of males in each family, we find that the average amount of direct taxation which falls upon each family is about twenty-three roubles and three-quarters, or, roughly speaking, about £3 of our money,"[1] if anything, rather more. "The Indirect Taxes are the Customs and Excise Duty." "The Recettes d'Ordre are the receipts from the sale of volumes of law, printed by the Government, the produce of State mines, and of other miscellaneous sources. The extraordinary receipts consist mainly of sums borrowed for the purpose of subsidizing railways, and for other works of public utility."[2]

[1] Wallace's "Russia," vol. ii., p. 376.
[2] The "Statesman's Year-Book" for 1880.

The expenditure for 1879 was as follows :—

	Roubles.
1. Ordinary Expenditure—	
Interest and Sinking Fund of the National Debt	156,577,526
Imperial Chancery	2,349,423
Holy Synod	10,187,123
Ministry of the Imperial House... ...	9,121,856
„ Foreign Affairs...	3,365,647
„ War	181,566,088
„ The Navy	26,195,582
„ Finance	75,396,316
„ Imperial Domains	18,360,102
„ The Interior	56,746,242
„ Public Instruction	16,230,116
„ Public Works & Railways	11,072,363
„ Justice	15,574,861
Department of General Control... ...	2,986,243
Civil administration of the Transcaucasus	7,350,285
Total ordinary expenditure... ...	593,079,773
2. Anticipated deficit in receipts	2,000,000
3. "Dépenses d'Ordre"[1]	24,136,218
4. Temporary disbursements...	9,367,766
Total expenditure...	628,583,757
Or	£89,797,679[2]

[1] Balancing the "Recettes d'Ordre" in the Expenditure.

[2] From the "Statesman's Year-Book," 1880, and "Almanach de Gotha," 1880.

The Budget for 1881, of which meagre details have reached England, shows that there will be a deficit of £5,036,000, which it is proposed to raise by calling in a portion of the sum of £13,800,000 advanced by the State to the railway companies. But it is hard to see how the companies can pay the debt, except by new loans, which in the present state of Russian finances capitalists will not be in a mood to make.[1]

The unlimited issue of paper money in past years tended to destroy the public credit. And though improved financial arrangements commenced in 1843, and the establishment of a State Bank under the control of the Minister of Finance, give hopes of the resumption of payments in specie in the course of years, the enormous sums spent on the army and navy, and the internal loans issued to provide them, have shaken the confidence of capitalists; and in the Budget of 1881, it appears that the Minister of War requires £1,705,000 more than last year.[2]

The public debt of Finland, on the 1st of January, 1880, was £2,453,000.[3] In the General Budget for 1879, the receipts are set down at £1,219,264, and the expenditure at £1,202,950; the accounts showing a deficiency of £16,314. The payments of the clergy, of the militia, and of certain civil functionaries,

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[1] *Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 17, 1881. [2] Ibid.
[3] "Almanach de Gotha."

are made partly by the Communes, and partly out of the proceeds of the State lands, and are in a special budget.[1]

The commerce of Russia is officially divided into commerce with Europe, commerce with Finland, and commerce with Asia; and is carried on through ports in the Baltic, over the frontiers by land, through the southern ports, and through the ports of the White Sea. In 1878 the value of the imports and exports, through these different routes, exclusive of precious metals, was:[2]—

	Imports. £		Exports. £
Ports of the Baltic	33,676,142	.....	26,618,428
The Frontiers	38,703,428	.....	25,578,285
The Ports of the South ...	7,185,714	.....	31,586,571
The Ports of the White Sea	111,142	.....	1,437,285
Trade with Europe	79,676,426	.....	85,220,569
Trade with Finland	1,394,714	.....	1,761,428
Trade with Asia	4,015,000	.....	1,327,142
	£85,086,140	.....	£88,309,139

The principal articles of import are raw cotton, iron and other unwrought metals, tea, and machinery of all kinds; and the staple articles of export are grain and other agricultural produce.[3] Trade is carried on chiefly with Germany and Great Britain. "Of the imports, about 40 per cent. annually come from

[1] "Almanach de Gotha," 1881. [2] Ibid.
[3] The "Statesman's Year-Book."

Germany, and 20 per cent. from Great Britain; and of the exports, 35 per cent. went to Great Britain, and 20 per cent. to Germany, on the average of the five years 1874 to 1878."[1] The grain exports, mainly wheat, to Great Britain during these same five years were of an annual value of nearly 10 millions sterling. The other exports were flax, wood and timber, flax-seed and linseed, hemp, tallow and stearine, bristles, wool, cordage and twine, oilseed cake, and tar.[2] And the imports from Great Britain "were iron wrought and unwrought, cotton stuffs and yarns, and woollens."[3] The exports to Great Britain in 1878 were to the amount of £27,317,500, and the imports from Great Britain, £21,236,000.[4]

The number of vessels entered at the different ports in 1878 were—Russian, 2,238; English, 3,325; German, 2,325; Swedish and Norwegian, 2,072; Dutch, 566; Italian, 831; Turkish, 2,003. And the Russian merchant marine, exclusive of the vessels plying on the rivers and lakes, consisted of 3,643 sailing vessels, of 308,230 tonnage; and of 259 steamers, of about 74,324 tonnage.

The trade of the Empire has been developed by a comprehensive system of railways. Since the first line was opened in 1838, up to the 1st of July, 1880, the total length of the lines in European Russia,

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book," 1880. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] "Almanach de Gotha."

exclusive of Finland, was 21,226 versts, rather more than 14,150 miles; and other lines are in process of construction. The existing lines are owned by 45 companies, of whom 15 were guaranteed by the Government to the full amount of their capital, 20 to a partial extent, and the other ten received no aid. The charters vary in length of duration, some being for 37 years, others for 75 and 85 years. But it appears that 48 and 8-10ths per cent. of the whole railway property of the country is held by the Government.[1] The number of passengers conveyed in 1879 was 33,247,080, and the amount of goods about 42,246,825 tons.

The number of post-offices in the Empire is 4,374. In 1879 the total of articles conveyed by post was 206,502,269, of which 78,620,531 were papers and periodicals, 10,822,560 were wrappers and packets, and the remainder letters.

On the 1st of January, 1879, the length of the telegraph lines was 59,012 English miles; and of wire, 117,229 English miles. Of these lines, one-third belongs to the State, and two-thirds to private companies inclusive of the railways. The total number of telegrams in 1878 was 5,761,731; the receipts, £1,124,544; and the expenditure, £845,957; the balance being employed in the construction of new lines.

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book," 1880.

The value of the imports to Russia from Finland, and of the exports from Russia to Finland, in 1878, was :—

	Imports.		Exports.
	£		£
Consumable commodities ...	314,000	.....	1,243,000
Raw material	141,300	.....	249,000
Manufactured articles	349,000	.....	257,600
Various articles	590,570	.....	12,140
Total	£1,394,870	.....	£1,761,740

The merchant navy of Finland consisted, on the 1st of June, 1879, of 1,827 sailing vessels, of 293,921 tons burden, exclusive of vessels under 20 tons; and of 176 steam vessels, of 302,603 tons. And about 10,000 sailors are employed in it.

At the same date, the State owned 520 miles of railway, and private companies 21 miles.

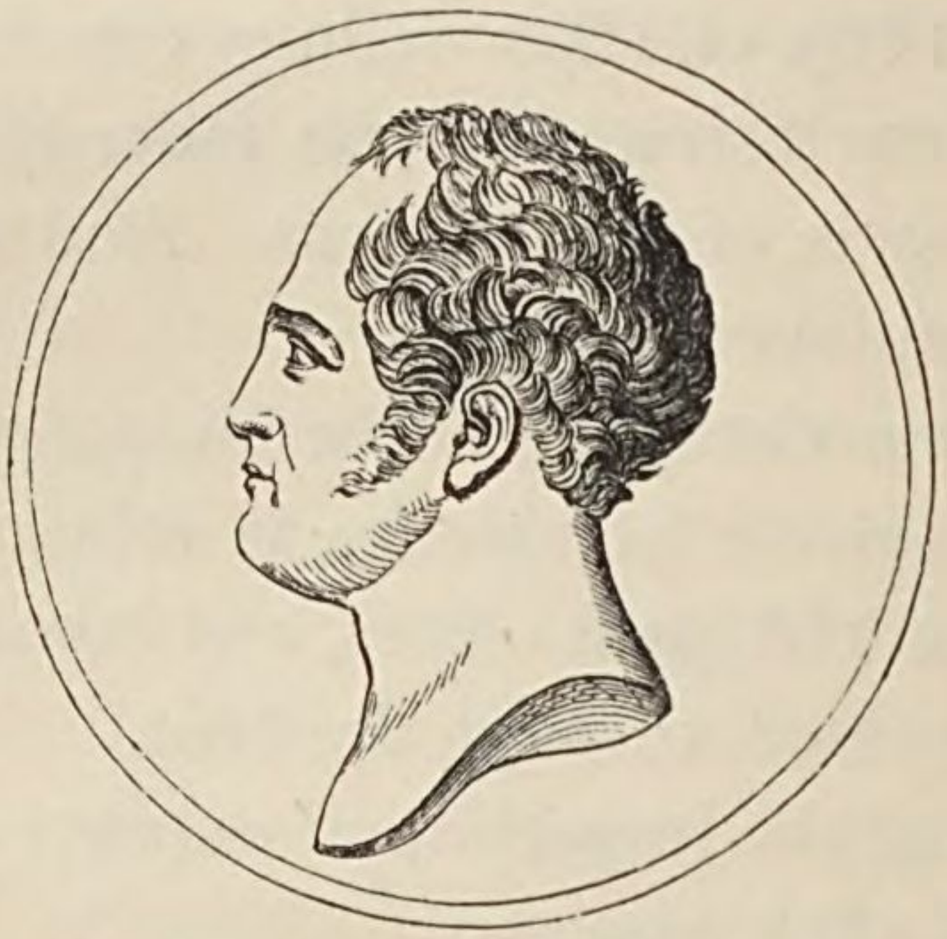
There were 116 post-offices, and 3,092,521 letters and parcels passed through the post.

The value of the imports and exports of the trade with Asia, in 1878, was :—

	Imports.		Exports.
	£		£
Tea	2,518,000	.....	—
Fruits and vegetables	316,400	.....	—
Silks, skins, and other merchandise	1,180,570	.....	1,327,000
Total merchandise ...	4,014,970	.....	1,327,000
Precious metals	62,430	.....	479,100
Total	£4,077,400	.....	£1,806,100

The trade across the frontier was, in 1878, to the amount of £557,100.[1]

A survey of the resources of the Russian Empire and of her commerce, confirms Mr. Barry's statement,[2] that "if Russia can only remain at peace for a few years, her development must assuredly be extraordinary."



ALEXANDER II.

[1] All these tables are taken from the "Almanach de Gotha," 1881.

[2] "Russia in 1870," p. 99.

CHAPTER V.

The Russian Church—Cathedrals—The Black Clergy—The White Clergy—Deacons, Sacristans, &c.—Monasteries—The Nicene Creed the Authoritative Expression of the Faith—Sacraments—Liturgy—Finland and Lutheranism—Schismatics—Sectarians—Education—Universities—Student Discontent—Literature—Newspapers—Painting—Sculpture—Music—Science.

TRADITION represents St. Andrew to have preached the Gospel in Scythia, and to have reached Kief. However this may be, it is not until 891 that we find a nominal Metropolitan of Russia, subject to Constantinople; nor was it until the conversion of Prince Vladimir, in 992, that Russia enthusiastically received the Gospel. The Metropolitans had their seat at Kief, but after the Tartar invasion, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, they removed it to Vladimir; from which it was again removed in 1520, by St. Peter the twenty-fifth Metropolitan, to Moscow.

Up to this date, the Russian Church was partially subject to the Œcumenical See of Constantinople; and the Metropolitan of Russia could not be consecrated without the consent of the Porte. But after Russia had been freed from the Tartars, and Constantinople overthrown by the Turks, the hostility of the Tsar to the Sultan made this arrangement most

inconvenient; "and in 1582, Jeremiah, then Patriarch of Constantinople, of his own authority, raised Job the forty-sixth Metropolitan to the Patriarchal dignity; a proceeding for which he afterwards obtained the confirmation of a General Council of the East."[1]

Up to the reign of the Tsar Peter the ten Patriarchs who sat in succession at Moscow had immense power. In 1701, Peter, jealous of this power, forbade the appointment of a successor to Adrian, and temporarily made Yavorsky guardian of the Patriarchate, until he had matured his plan of establishing a Holy Governing Synod to supply the place of the Patriarch. "This Synod[2] was to consist of five or six bishops, one or two other ecclesiastics of dignity, and several laymen as officials, all appointed by the Emperor, who is styled the Protector or Defender of the Church. To this Synod are referred all theological and dogmatic questions; and, if a critical question arises, appeal is made to the four Eastern Patriarchs, and finally, to a Council; and the decision once given, the Tsar is bound to enforce it."

There are in Russia, exclusive of Georgia, nearly 500 cathedrals,[3] and about 43,000 churches, attached

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[1] Dr. J. M. Neale's "History of the Holy Eastern Church," vol. i., p. 56. [2] Ibid.

[3] "Cathedral," used absolutely for the Ecclesia Cathedralis, belongs to the Western Church only.—Dict. "Christ. Antiq.," *sub voce.*

to the orthodox faith,[1] 435 monasteries, and 113 convents. The Church is governed by about 60 bishops, and served by 34,000 priests and 16,000 deacons. Each civil province forms a diocese, and the bishop, like the civil governor, has a Council, which theoretically controls his power, but practically has no controlling influence whatever, and is, in reality, the bishop's "Chancellerie."[2] The Sees, or Eparchies, of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kief, and Wilna, are presided over by Metropolitans.[3] In the election of a bishop, three candidates are submitted by the Holy Synod to the Tsar, who selects one from them, giving the preference to any one candidate who may be strongly recommended by the Synod. These candidates must be priests of monastic orders; and if a Protopope, that is, the first priest or pope in a great church be selected, as he may be after the death of his wife, he must assume the monastic habit before he can be consecrated to the Episcopate.[4]

The clergy are divided into three classes. The Monks, or Regular Clergy, called the *Black*, to which all the bishops and higher dignitaries, as well as most of the directors and teachers in religious seminaries, belong, form the ruling authority. The *White*, or

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book," p. 371; and Neale, p. 57.
[2] Wallace's "Russia," vol. ii., p. 186. [3] Eckhardt, p. 213.
[4] King, "Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia."

Secular Clergy, occupy the second rank; they are styled *Popes*, or Fathers. Ordination to the priesthood pre-supposes the completion of a course of instruction in an ecclesiastical seminary and marriage with a virgin. If a priest loses his wife, then, as a second marriage is no more permissible than celibacy, he must either become a monk or resign his position as a clergyman.

The third order is composed of the sixteen thousand deacons, and of thousands of sacristans, clerks, and singers, consisting, for the most part, of students of theology who have not been able to pass an examination.[1] The contrast and the hostility between the monks and the secular clergy form a characteristic peculiarity of the Russian Church, and are of very ancient date. "The connexion of the Russian Church with the Eastern," says Dr. Eckhardt,[2] "is specially emphasized by the monastic clergy up to the present time, whilst the secular ecclesiastics, it is true, only instinctively and unconsciously represent a national Russian starting-point."

The parochial clergy are recruited chiefly from the rank of the peasantry, and are but poorly educated; the generality of them have little influence with their people. Their chief occupation is to administer the sacraments, and perform other offices of the Church;

[1] Eckhardt, p. 214. [2] P. 227.

preaching very seldom forms a part of their ministration. Mr. Wallace quotes a secret report to the Grand Duke Constantine on the causes of the want of respect for the clergy, but adds: "The reader must not imagine that all Russian priests are of the kind above referred to. Many of them are honest, respectable, well-intentioned men, who conscientiously fulfil their humble duties, and strive hard to procure a good education for their children."[1] The parish clergy never possessed tithes; their income arises from Easter offerings, fees, glebe, and a small stipend. "Church property," according to Dr. J. M. Neale, was, to a great extent, put in commission by Peter the Great, for the benefit of the Church; and it thus remained till Catherine II. confiscated the larger portion, retaining part for herself, and distributing part among her nobles. The Emperor Nicholas I. nobly formed a fund of the Church property still belonging to the Crown, with which he endowed about twelve of the poorer dioceses, and made provision for the extension of this holy work, as the revenues accumulated.[2] For the payment of the stipends of the country clergy (the town clergy have no stipends from the State[3]), nine millions and a half of roubles is charged in the

[1] Vol. i., p. 89.
[2] "History of the Holy Eastern Church," p. 58.
[3] "Murray's Handbook," p. 24.

Budget of 1875, equivalent to nearly £1,200,000; and out of this a sum of £10 is paid to each village priest—who has, in addition, about 85 acres of glebe—and £4. 10s. to his clerk.[1] Easter offerings and fees make up a miserable income, by which the priests contrive to support their families in a position just above that of a peasant.[2]

"The main reason of the relatively low stage of culture and unfavourable social position of the Russian secular clergy," says Dr. Eckhardt,[3] "is undoubtedly to be sought for in their poverty. Where the care for material existence occupies life, and impels to the most painful expedients for subsistence, any scientific and intellectual advance is out of the question."

For the Protestant clergy of the German and Swedish western provinces, there is a comparatively splendid provision. But even in Russia proper, not only Lutheran and Roman Catholic, but Lama and Mohammedan, are often better paid than the orthodox priests.[4]

The Russian monasteries, on the other hand, receive very considerable support from the State; the largest being supported by 5,000 roubles annually, the smallest by 1,500 roubles. This subsidy forms,

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[1] "Murray's Handbook," p. 24.
[2] Harrison's "Nine Years' Residence in Russia," p. 137.
[3] "Modern Russia," p. 233. [4] Eckhardt, p. 231.

however, but a small portion of the income, which is derived from a variety of sources. The sums paid for monastery tombs are almost fabulous. A grave at St. Alexander Nevski costs as much as 15,000 roubles. Large contributions are also derived from pilgrims' offerings, and from alms-boxes set up in public places. The monasteries are also possessed of three very lucrative privileges. They alone have the right of baking the hallowed wafers, of making consecrated tapers, and of establishing churchyards within the city walls.[1]

The *Nicene Creed* in the Eastern form, omitting the clause which declares that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father, contains the ordinary *authoritative* expression of the faith of the Church; and its recitation is still the culminating point of the service in the Church of Russia. The great bell of the Kremlin Tower at Moscow sounds during the whole time that its words are chanted in that place. It is repeated aloud in the presence of the assembled people by the Emperor at his coronation; and it is worked in pearls on the robes of the highest dignitaries in Moscow.[2] Besides the Nicene Creed, the Russian Church holds the Creed of St. Athanasius, at least so far, that it is inserted in

[1] Eckhardt, p. 222, 223.

[2] "The Holy Eastern Church," with a preface by Dr. Littledale, p. 32, from which this summary is made.

the Book of Hours; but it varies from the Western form in the matter of the Double Procession, and forms no part of the Public Service. In the Russian Church the Holy Bible is reverenced, and the people are encouraged to read it in their own language.

The Russian Church believes in seven Mysteries or Sacraments—Baptism, Baptismal Unction or Confirmation, the Eucharist, Confession, Ordination, Marriage, Unction of the sick. In Baptism trine immersion is insisted on, and Confirmation follows immediately after the immersion of Baptism, the priest anointing the person baptized with ointment consecrated with many curious ceremonies by the Bishop. In the Eucharist the use of the Cup is allowed to the laity, and infants are communicated from the Cup immediately after Confirmation, and about twice a year afterwards until the age of seven years, when they make their first Confession, and receive the Eucharist in both kinds. Confession is necessary previous to communion, and is enforced on the laity by the laws of the land; prayers and services for the dead are admitted as an old and pious custom, and the Invocation of Saints is allowed.

"There are four great Fasts: Lent, of seven weeks' duration; the Petrof, before St. Peter's Day, in June, of two to four weeks' duration, accordingly as Easter Sunday falls; the Assumption, from the 1st to the 15th of August; and St. Philip's Fast of six weeks

before Christmas. . . . . The Calendar in use is the Julian or Greek, which is twelve days behind the Gregorian or Latin." [1]

The authorized daily Liturgy in present use is that of St. Chrysostom, from which the Collect in the English Matins and Evensong, called a prayer of St. Chrysostom, is taken; and the liturgy of St. Basil is used eleven times in the year. The people are instructed in their faith by the Catechism authorized by the Church and published under the sanction of the Government. Instrumental music is not permitted in churches, neither are statues and bas-reliefs; but pictures of our blessed Lord, the blessed Virgin and other Saints, are found in all churches, and are also general in private houses. These are executed in archaic Byzantine style on a yellow or gold ground, and vary in size from a square inch to several square feet. Very often the whole picture, with the exception of the face and hands of the figure, is covered with a metal plaque embossed so as to represent the form of the figures and drapery, "a modern innovation." When this plaque is not used, the crown and the dress are often adorned with pearls and other precious stones, sometimes of great price.[2]

Mr. Wallace, a good authority, admits that the Russian people are in a certain sense religious. He

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[1] "Encyclopædia Britannica." [2] Wallace's "Russia," vol. i., p. 98.

represents them to be punctilious in their attendance on public worship and in their observance of the Church's orders, but profoundly ignorant of religious doctrines and Holy Writ. Educated Russians, as a rule, take no interest in Church matters.[1]

Finland retains the Lutheranism which was its religion before it was conquered by Russia; and the Russian Church is brought into contact with Paganism in the Caucasus and Armenia, with Buddhism in Mongolia, and with Mahometanism along her whole southern frontier.

It must not be forgotten that of the 54 million nominal members of the National Church more than one-fifth are schismatics, and thus maintain an attitude of more or less passive resistance to the Government.

The schism in the Russian Church had its beginnings soon after the first conversion of the nation to Christianity; its later developments date from the reformation of the sacred books of the Patriarch Nikon in 1654. In the latter half of the 14th century there was a sect of *Strigolniki*, "Shorn ones," in Novgorod and in Pskof, who rejected the priestly office. In Kief the sect of the *Sabatniki*, Sabbath fasters, arose in the 15th century, and denied the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity, and rejected the worship of saints and pictures.

[1] Wallace, vol. i., p. 102.

In many of the later sects, as for instance among the Priestless Sect which spread with such rapidity in Northern Russia, the tenets of these early dissidents still survive. The dissensions between the clergy of the orthodox Church and the sectarians awakened a spirit of inquiry, and led the former to peruse the sacred books more attentively, and to compare the text of the Scriptures then in common use with the more ancient Greek and Slav manuscripts, and to undertake translations, alterations and paraphrases. Owing to the ignorance of the clergy, and to their imperfect acquaintance with the original Greek, mistranslations and other errors naturally found their way into these new books; just as great divergences and irregularities had come to manifest themselves in the performance of the religious services.

The necessity for a thorough revision became more and more generally acknowledged, but was continually deferred. At last, at a general convocation of the clergy under the presidency of the Tsar Alexis, the reformation of the church books and the church ritual was determined on, and was confided to the Patriarch Nikon, who carried out the work entrusted to him with the greatest diligence and conscientiousness. A storm of universal disapprobation greeted the appearance of the new books. Not the ignorant and prejudiced masses alone but a great

portion of the clergy, the most distinguished Boyards, and even the devout Tsarina Maria, rejected the novelties as heresies.

During the space of two years the Tsar Alexis was unfortunately absent in Lithuania; and from the very first the Tsarina, the court, and the clergy belonging to the Kremlin, appeared as the leaders of the schism, which soon spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. At this same period a terrible outbreak of the plague devastated the country, depopulating whole towns and villages, so that the bodies of the dead lay unburied in the houses, the streets, and the open fields. The appearance of a comet following on the plague heightened the general conviction that the heresies of the "wolf Nikon" were calling down the judgments of God upon the land. Nikon was by no means the man to quail before this outburst of popular indignation and terror. During the Tsar's absence he had been Regent in the full sense of the word, and he calmly pursued his way and insisted upon the use of the new books in all churches and religious houses throughout the land.

After the Tsar's return, a general Church Assembly was convoked to pass judgment upon the reforms advocated by Nikon, and to give him an opportunity to defend himself from the various allegations made against him. The people waited for the decision in breathless expectation; for was it not the year 1666?

a date which contained the mystic number of the Beast; and might not Nikon prove to be Antichrist? Nikon's enemies triumphed; he was deposed from the patriarchal dignity, and banished in the garb of a simple monk to the monastery of Belosersk. The chief accusation against him was that he had caused the old books, and among them the books of the Fathers of the Church, and the lives of the Saints, to be publicly burnt. What had been done with impunity by Philarete, father of the Tsar Michael Romanof, was a crime in the son of a Mordwine peasant; but though Nikon was disgraced the new books were maintained in use, and their adoption was made obligatory.

At this date sprang up the *Raskolniki*, or Schismatics, who dissented from the Nikonian reforms. Excommunicated by the Holy Synod, and persecuted by the Civil Power, they fled from their homes, numbers to the north of Russia and Siberia, and others to Austria and the neighbouring countries. But they very soon split up into two principal divisions. The Bezpopoftsi, or people without priests, "declared boldly that the orthodox Church had ceased to exist, that the ancient means of grace had been withdrawn, and that those who had remained faithful must thenceforth seek salvation, not in the sacraments, but in prayer and such other religious exercises as did not require the co-operation of duly

consecrated priests."[1] At a later period the priestless sect "fell into two sections; the one called *Pomórtsi*, the other *Theodosians*, after Theodosi their founder; who were at first wild in their fanaticism, but gradually relaxed their severer views.

Various other Sects exist, some of which, such as the *Skoptsi*, hold tenets and indulge in practices subversive of all social and personal morality. The *Molokani* advocate doctrines which have a strong resemblance to Presbyterianism, and are distinguished by their sobriety, uprightness, and material prosperity.[2] The *Staró-obriádtsi*, Old Ritualists, or Old Believers, agreed with the *Bezpopoftsi* in opposition to the Nikonian reforms; but "believed that, though the ecclesiastical authorities had become heretical, the Church still continued in the communion of those who had refused to accept the innovations; and retained all the sacraments and ceremonial observances in the older form." Since the year 1844 they have had their own Bishops, deriving their succession from the deposed Metropolitan of Bosnia; but previously to that date they were obliged to accept the runaway priests of the Orthodox Church.[3] In many districts the Old Believers form the most respectable class of the community; and the fact that

[1] Wallace's "Russia," vol. ii., p. 14.

[2] Ibid., vol. i., p. 455.

[3] Ibid., vol. ii., pp. 14, 17.

a great majority abjure the use of spirituous liquors in itself raises them above the level of their orthodox fellow-countrymen.

The reforms which have been introduced since the accession of the late Emperor, Alexander II., in the education of the children of the laity and clergy, though far from satisfactory at present, give promise of good; and the Ministry of Public Instruction was credited in 1879 with £2,318,000 to maintain and extend the scheme. The Empire is divided into ten educational districts, of which the centres are St. Petersburg, Moscow, Dorpat, Kief, Warsaw, Wilna, Kazan, Kharkof, Odessa, and the Caucasus; each presided over by a Curator, "in theory omnipotent," in practice aided by an academical council of six members. The schools are divided into *primary*, of which there were, in 1871, 22,827, with 831,402 children; and *district*, which were in number 424 and educated 27,820 scholars; 153 gymnasia and protogymnasia for males, and 173 for females, with 58,478 pupils. It will be seen at a glance that no provision is made, on a large scale, for the education of the peasant children, who are left to the care of the village clergy and to the efforts of the landowners. It is calculated that at the present time only one-tenth of the population can read and write; the average in Austria being 29 per cent.; in France, 77.[1]

[1] "The *Neue Freie Presse* extracts from a Russian journal,

"Primary education," says Monsieur Rambaud,[1] "is more advanced in Poland because Government has made strong efforts there; in the Baltic provinces and in Finland, because they are Lutheran; and in Central Russia through the demand made for it by

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called the *Elementary School Teacher*, some interesting statistics of elementary education in Russia. It appears that of all children in St. Petersburg who are of fit age for school only 41 per cent. are actually being taught. There are 30,000 children in St. Petersburg who go to no school whatever. The government of St. Petersburg—that is, the district of which St. Petersburg is the centre—is still worse off. Not quite 25 per cent. of the children go to school. In the Moscow government the percentage is only 15; while in the town of Moscow itself it goes as low as 12. In the Tambow government the figures are $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., in that of Poltawa 7 per cent., and the same in that of Samara. In only a few governments is the percentage appreciably higher. In Bessarabia, 40 per cent. of the children go to school; in Kazan, 36 per cent.; in Pensa, 28 per cent. There are districts here and there in different governments—those of Kaluga or Saratow, for instance—where the number of children who can read or write is a good deal higher than the average of the province. The worst of it is that in all these cases the population is not pure Russian, but contains a strong German or Finnish element. The position occupied by Bessarabia points in the same direction. The Russian journal concludes its remarks by pointing out that if all the Russian people is to be educated, there will be 1,000 new schools wanted in the St. Petersburg government, 2,600 in that of Novgorod, and, not to mention other instances, as many as 5,000 in that of Charkow."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 1880.

[1] "History of Russia," vol. ii., p. 409.

the industrial influences." A great development has been given to the education of girls by the ready access afforded them to employment in Government postal, telegraph, and other offices. It is stated that in 1875, 169 lady students went through the courses of surgery and medicine in the University of St. Petersburg. But religious education, which in other countries forms the groundwork of all female education, plays a pitiful part here.[1]

There are eight universities, which in 1876 numbered 5,466 students and 457 free pupils; St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkof, Kazan, Kief, Dorpat, Odessa founded in 1864, and Warsaw founded in 1869. Of these St. Petersburg is the most aristocratic and most distinguished for modern languages and Latin, Odessa the most liberal and most famed for Greek and mathematics, Kief for theology and history, Moscow for law and medicine;[2] Dorpat is purely German in its character, Helsingfors purely Swedish, "both priding themselves on representing the culture of Protestantism and Western Europe."[3] At Moscow and Kief only do the students board within the college, in the others student life is a mixture of the systems of the French

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[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 234.
[2] "The Russians of To-day," p. 254.
[3] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 189.

and German universities.[1] On a somewhat similar footing with the universities are departmental schools, such as the Medico-Surgical Academy, the School of Law, and the Lyceum at St. Petersburg, the Richelieu at Odessa, and the Besburdko Lyceum at Nejin;[2] and Military Academies in which, after a two years' residence and an examination, a young man may obtain a commission in the army.

The discipline is said to be lax, the morals are low, and the students are addicted to forming political clubs. The amount of knowledge demanded from a Russian lad of nineteen or twenty would be enough to astonish a master of Eton or Harrow or an Oxford tutor: "but in reality," says Mr. Carrington,[3] who was a master at the Lyceum in Moscow, "the educational system in Russia is, like everything else in Russia, quite exterior and superficial."

It is impossible to give, in a short space, a description of the existence and the origin of the student discontent and rebellions. These are suggested by Mr. Taylor in the concluding words of his chapter on Russian Universities: "No real remedy or redress will be possible until the New Russia has succeeded in establishing such order as will set limits not only to the *governed* but to the *governing*, and allay for

[1] "The Russians of To-day," p. 253.
[2] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 188.
[3] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 210.

ever all those apprehensions of the academical *ancien régime* which, coupled with the occasional displays of tyranny by those in power, have been the main causes of all the more recent disturbances at the universities. Stable arrangements and regulations, guaranteed by law and really respected, are at present wholly wanting; and until these exist Russia will retain the feeling of not being able to 'endure' academies and academical freedom."[1]

The literature of Russia commences in the ninth century with the translation of the Bible by St. Cyril and St. Methodius into the old Bulgarian speech, called now the "Church Slavonic," a work most interesting to the philologist. To the sixteenth century are assigned various ecclesiastical books compiled from the Fathers; Lives of the Saints, of which the most remarkable is the Tchetiminei, the work of the Metropolitan Macarius in the reign of Ivan the Terrible; the Code; the Demostroi of Pope Silvester, minister of Ivan IV., "a collection of precepts instructing readers in the art of keeping house and of securing salvation;" and the Histories of Kourbski, the enemy of Ivan the Terrible. There was also a literature, which, to use the words of Monsieur Rambaud, "could do without the art of Gutenburg, and which in the sixteenth century attained its most

[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 225.

splendid development," a literature preserved by oral tradition : wild poetry, marriage and dance songs, funeral and festal hymns, epics narrating the legends of early heroes of Russia, religious verses celebrating the saints, and satirical fables ridiculing the greed of the parish clergy and their wives.

But in the reign of the Empress Elizabeth appeared a writer and a modernizer of the Russian language, Lomonossof, the son of a fisherman of Archangel, who passed through the universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, and was sent to Germany to complete his studies. Labouring to free the language from the Sclavonic of the church, which gave it a stiff archaic form, he published a grammar and other works ; amongst others, Panegyrics of Peter and Elizabeth, and Odes which are regarded as masterpieces. Following him, after an interval of some years, and still further modernizing the language, came the prose writer Karamsin and the poet Demetrief, both members of distinguished families, who created among the people for the first time a taste for reading. The elegant fables of Krylof, the plays of Griboyedof, especially his satirical comedy on the society of Moscow, the translations by Joukovski of contemporary English and German poets, and by Martinof and Guaditch of the Greek classics and of the Iliad, exercised great influence, and are reckoned among the classic literature of Russia.

In general, says Monsieur Rambaud, the literature of this period marks the passage from the imitation of the ancients, or of classic French writers, to the imitation of the German or English masterpieces. But the brilliant and eloquent, though uncritical history of Russia by Karamsin began to inspire the writers with a taste for national subjects; and Pouchkine, in his earlier days an imitator of Byron, became the poet, dramatist, and novelist of the Russian people, and holds the highest place in the admiration of his countrymen. Next to him in public estimation is the poet Hermontof, who died young, and, like Pouchkine, in a duel; and equally popular is Gogol, the poet of the scenes from the peasant life of Russia, the Russian Charles Dickens, who, in early life a suitor for the favour of the great and for admission into the highest society of St. Petersburg, at a later period, sick in body and in mind, became a confirmed misanthropist, sought peace in religious asceticism, and both recanted and did penance for the opinions which he had expressed in his writings. Among modern novelists, Turguenief, Tolstoi, Gontcharof, Pisemski, and Dostoieviski are most esteemed.

Russia is not rich in scientific literature, nor has historical literature made much advance since Karamsin published his "History of the Russian State," which is still the text-book of the Russian student, and the reference-book of all who write on

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

Russian history. But since the relaxation of the censorship, translations of scientific, historical, philosophical, and politico-economical works by English and other writers are published, and their circulation is permitted.

But great and beneficial as was the influence exercised by the group of writers above named on literary taste, they were one and all members of the higher classes, with whom they associated, and were never in real sympathy with the people. Amongst the foremost to enter the lists on the popular side were Polovoi, the editor of the *Moscow Telegraph*, and subsequently of *The Son of the Country*, and Belinski, who died in 1848, the bitter enemy of the ruling system, and the unwearied advocate of the re-organization of the whole system of Russian literature. These two were the pioneers of the realistic school; who, on the one hand ridiculing the half-heartedness and aristocratic tendency of the historians, novelists, and poets, and on the other condemning the dangerous tendencies of the Slavophil agitation, set themselves to avoid all idealizing, and to describe men as they are.

The newspapers, of which there are in the Russian language 377, and in all 472, employ a large number of writers. Though the censorship has been relaxed, the periodical publications are under the control of the Minister of the Interior, and are liable to a system of *avertissements* and *suspensions*, which has been borrowed from the French. The *Moscow Journal* holds

the foremost place in circulation, and belongs to the University. Next is the *Golos*, published at St. Petersburg. Other journals of importance are the *Gazette de St. Pétersbourg*, the mouthpiece of the Imperial Foreign Office; the *New Era*, devoted to Slav interests; the *Gazette de la Bourse*, which sympathized with France in the war of 1870; the *Invalide Russe*, and the *Monde Russe*. Of monthly reviews, or magazines, those of most general interest are the *Messager Russe*, the *Messager d'Europe*, the *Declo*, an advanced organ; and these four, specially treating of history, the *Archive Russe*, the *Antiquité Russe*, the *Russie Ancienne et Nouvelle*, and the *Recueil de la Société Impériale d'Histoire Russe*.[1]

Mr. Barry, writing in 1870, gives it as his opinion that "under the new *régime* the people are becoming intelligent and apt to imbibe new ideas; newspapers are more numerous, and more generally read than they used to be. One hears much discussion of politics and the acts of Government; the masses are being aroused to watchfulness of their own interests; and the old lethargy of despondency, that a few years ago was so characteristic of the Russian character, is altogether gone."

Russia has a *School of Painting*, founded by Lossenko in 1759, of which the most distinguished

[1] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 411.

moderns are the landscape painter, Aïazovski; the portrait painters, Tropinine, Kharmalof, and Zarenko; the painters of history, Makhovski, Semigradski, Gay, and Flavitski; the painters of *genre* or of battles, Sterenberg, Verechtchaghine, and Repine; and a *School of Sculpture*, of which the sculptors Antakolski, Kamenski, and Piménef, have an European fame.[1]

The most ancient musical work in Russia is a canticle composed in honour of Prince Boris and Prince Gleb, who were canonized in the twelfth century, discovered in the library of the Troitza Monastery, near Moscow.[2] The old traditional church music is two centuries earlier in date, and was brought from Constantinople by Michael I., Metropolitan of Russia. There are lingering among the peasantry national airs of great sweetness, and among the gipsies wild and passionate songs, Oriental in their character. Mr. Sutherland Edwards regards "the Russian national music, for character and melody, as superior to that of any nation in Europe,"[3] and asserts "that the Russians have a National School of Music."[4] The most distinguished composers are Count Vielgorski, Lvof, Varlamof, Glinka, Tchaïkovski, Siérof, Dorgomyjski, and Rubinstein.[5]

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[1] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 412. [2] "The Russians at Home," p. 200. [3] Ibid., p. 192. [4] Ibid., p. 194. [5] "The Russians at Home," and Rambaud.

The scientific movement, too, has taken breadth and variety; Russian men of science are now known to Western Europe, and the learned of the West are invited to international meetings at Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kief, and Kazan.[1]

THE EMPRESS, CATHERINE II.

[1] Rambaud, vol. ii., p. 413. Reference has also been made to "Murray's Handbook."

CHAPTER VI.

ST. PETERSBURG.

Situation—Nevski Prospect—The Neva—Winter Palace—St. Isaac's Church—The Founding of the City—Climate—Blessing the Waters—Easter—"Bride-Show"—Baths—Population—Peterhof—Tsarskoé-Selo.

THE modern capital of Russia is built along arms and on various islands of the river Neva, and has a circuit of about 20 miles. The most important quarters of the city are on the left bank of the Neva, where the Court, the nobility, and half the population dwell, and on Wassili Ostrof (Basil's Island), where the foreign merchants for the most part reside.

The streets of St. Petersburg are broad and regular; the three principal radiate from the grand Square of the Admiralty, round which stand the chief buildings of the City. The main streets are called *Prospects;* the cross streets, *Péréuloks;* even the cross streets are broad, but all are badly paved. The great Nevski Prospect is about two and a half miles in length, and has been nicknamed "Toleration Street," on account of the very numerous places of worship, belonging to various religious denominations which it contains.

In spite of the number and beauty of its public buildings, the general impression produced by the city on a stranger is, as a rule, one of uniformity and dulness; this is owing partly to the dead level of the ground, and partly to the immense width of the streets, and to the vastness of the squares and public gardens, which are quite out of proportion to the needs of the population.

The great feature of St. Petersburg is its river, the mighty volume of whose clear blue waters flows between massive granite quays. The Neva is no ordinary stream, though its whole length does not exceed forty miles. It is in places as much as 300 yards wide, and it is in fact the outflow of Lake Ladoga, a vast sheet of water covering an area of 6,597 square miles, at a height of fifty-nine feet above the sea. The Nicholas Bridge, which connects the important suburb of Wassili Ostrof with the mainland, is constructed with iron arches on granite piers; and numerous other bridges, some floating, some supported on boats, afford communication between other portions of the town, and between the five other islands on which portions of the city are built.

The Palace of the Senate, built in severe classical style, is connected by a colonnade with the Palace of the Synod, and forms one side of the vast square of the Admiralty, in which stands the colossal equestrian figure of Peter the Great. The granite rock which

forms its base bears the inscription, "Petro Primo Catherina Secunda." The statue is the work of the French sculptor, Falconet. The Winter Palace, the ordinary residence of the Imperial Family, built in 1762 from the plans of Rastrelli, and sadly lacking grandeur, is situated on the Neva Quay, having a frontage of 455 feet. Opposite to it, on an island in the Neva, rise the gloomy fortress and cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul. In this fortress are the crown treasury, the mint, and the state prisons; in the cathedral the Tsars, since the time of Peter the Great, with the exception of Peter II., have been interred. The Hermitage, so named by the Empress Catherine II., is a continuation of the Winter Palace, and contains extensive picture galleries, in which the Dutch School is particularly well represented.

The most noteworthy churches are the Cathedral, dedicated to St. Isaac, and the Church of Our Lady of Kazan.

St. Isaac's was built in 1858 of the most costly materials. The four chief entrances have each a superb peristyle, supported by 112 pillars, 60 feet in height and 7 feet in diameter, which are monoliths of polished granite, crowned with Corinthian capitals of bronze. The outer and the inner walls are cased in marble; and the building is crowned by a lofty dome supported by thirty lofty pillars of granite, and flanked by four smaller gilt cupolas.

The Kazan Church has a gigantic semicircular colonnade, which is a not very successful imitation of St. Peter's at Rome. The interior is rich in sacred pictures adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones. That of the Holy Mother of Kasan is an object of very special devotion.[1]

St. Petersburg contains about forty Greek orthodox churches, and seventeen belonging to other Christian communities.

Less than two centuries ago the ground on which St. Petersburg now stands was a mere swamp, overgrown with brushwood and pine forests, the haunt of bears, wolves, and wild fowl. Only a few poor Finnish fishermen plied their trade on the sedge-grown banks and islands of the Neva.

The dreary spot which Peter the Great selected as the site of his future capital, "the window through which Russia was to look out on Europe," was not even a part of his dominions; it had to be wrung from Sweden before the more arduous conflict with nature herself could be undertaken. The iron will of the Tsar prevailed over all obstacles, but at the cost of a vast expenditure of treasure and of human lives.

During the earlier years of its existence, St. Peters-

[1] A copy of this picture, which hung in the Guard-room of the Winter Palace, remained uninjured, though its frame was shattered by the recent explosion (February, 1880), and has since then been an object of special devotion to the soldiers of the Guard.

burg suffered from frightful inundations. Between the years 1703–1725, no less than six took place; even so lately as 1873, one occurred which caused great damage to property and some loss of life.

The greater portion of the buildings in the city, with the exception of the fortress, were in the first instance built of wood; but so eager was Peter for the rapid development of his new capital, that he resorted to various arbitrary expedients for the furtherance of his favourite object. The erection of a house of stone, anywhere but in St. Petersburg, was declared an act punishable with confiscation of goods and exile. Every owner of over 500 serfs was bound to build a house two stories high; every vessel was compelled to land a certain amount of stone; and so by degrees stone palaces replaced the wooden huts of the early settlers. Along the marshy shores of the Neva and of the three canals which intersect the city rose quays of massive granite. Public buildings, churches with their glittering cupolas and golden crosses, rapidly increased; and from the dreary northern morass rose, in ten years, the great creation of Peter, the Venice of the North.

According to Mr. Wallace the stone buildings present nothing that can be called a distinctively national style, being borrowed chiefly from the styles of Southern Europe; the wooden buildings alone possess a characteristic Russian style.

Some interesting relics of the great Tsar are preserved in St. Petersburg. In the fortress may still be seen the vessel built by his own hands, the so-called "grandfather of the Russian navy:" a sailing boat about thirty feet long, and nearly nine feet broad, with a carved figure head representing a bearded priest. Close by is the wooden hut which was also built by him, and which he himself inhabited, until he had erected a more convenient dwelling. This is still standing in a corner of the Summer Garden, and presents a striking contrast to the palaces by which it is surrounded. A modern tradesman would despise the modest furniture and scanty comfort with which the Great Peter was content.

The swampy delta of the Neva makes the climate damp and cold. At the best the summer is soon over; in August the sky becomes overcast, and the winds grow cold; in September night-frosts commence, and heavy mists hang over land and water. On an average of ten years it is said that there are annually at St. Petersburg 97 bright days, 104 with rain, 72 with snow, and 93 unsettled. The winter season generally sets in about the beginning of November, when the Neva freezes, and lasts until the end of April, when the ice breaks up. But so variable is the climate, owing to the proximity of the Gulf of Finland, that "rain and a complete thaw will occasion-

ally follow 18° of Fahrenheit.[1] From tables given in Mr. Murray's Handbook, the mean annual temperature is 38·7 Fahrenheit; the winter (December, January, February), 18·3; the summer (June, July, August), 60·6.[2]

Winter is the finest season in St. Petersburg. During the reign of snow and ice the inhabitants seem to revive, and the town puts on its gayest aspect. Keen as is the cold it does not much affect the Russian, even out of doors, wrapped in his heavy furs; and the houses are heated with stoves and never allowed to cool. Every room has double windows and double or triple doors. Ventilation is provided for by so-called *Forlotschka's*, little ventilators in the large windows. In bright weather the lowest temperature occurs. The ice in the Neva, often six feet thick, is covered with dazzling snow. Clothes, hair, and beards are coated with rime and icicles. "Little father, your nose! your cheek!" the passers-by say to one another, if they chance to espy certain round, chalky marks on these features; for the victim of frost-bite is unconscious of his misfortune. A vigorous rubbing of the affected part with snow until feeling returns must then at once be resorted to. In such cold the poorest peasant, the beggar even, must continually wear a sheepskin, or die of cold. In the squares and open

[1] "Murray's Handbook," p. 69.

[2] Ibid., p. 68.

places, and before the theatres, great bonfires are lighted at night for the benefit of the drosky drivers and of the common people.

In winter time numbers of country people flock to St. Petersburg to supply the markets of the capital with provisions, which, being frozen hard, can be preserved fresh for months. At Christmas the hay market (Senaya Ploschad) presents a curious spectacle. Poultry of all kinds, hares, pigs, hogs, mountain-cocks, heather-cocks, geese, ducks, sturgeon, shad-fish, and pike, are tastefully arranged, either set up stiffly on end or piled in huge stacks. To cut up the meat, a saw or sharp axe is necessary; a knife would be useless. The splinters of frozen meat fly about like chips and are collected by the beggar children. Bears and elks also occasionally appear in the dead meat market.

On the Epiphany is celebrated the Benediction of the Waters, intended to symbolize the sanctification by water of our Lord's Baptism in Jordan to the mystical washing away of sin. Upon the ice of the Neva a chapel is raised, which is called Jordan, and is surrounded by fir-trees; it is richly painted, and adorned with pictures, in which St. John the Baptist is conspicuous. In the middle of the chapel a hole is cut through the ice; and on the conclusion of the Service in the Imperial Chapel, the Bishop and clergy proceed to "the Jordan," followed by the

Emperor and the Court. An Office of great beauty is used for the blessing of the river; and, as soon as it is finished, the immediate bye-standers are sprinkled with the holy water, which is regarded as a cure, not only of spiritual, but of bodily infirmities. Then follows an exciting scene; old and young press forward to the hole in the ice; some to drink, others to wash in the blest stream, others again to fill bottles to carry home for the benefit of sufferers in the ensuing year. Though the Benediction is nowhere attended with such pomp as in St. Petersburg, it is celebrated in most of the towns and villages of European Russia which are situated on a stream.

In the month of April the Neva bursts its icy covering, and the guns of the fortress announce the event. According to an old custom the commandant of the fortress carries a goblet of the clear water of the Neva to the Emperor, receiving in return a sum of money.

In St. Petersburg, Easter is, and always has been, the great Russian feast and holiday, and the consumption of eggs and of oranges during Easter week is something enormous. On Easter-day the Emperor receives all the Court dignitaries, the generals and the officers of the Guard, and exchanges with them the Easter kiss and the greeting, "Christos voskres," "Christ is risen;" the proper answer being, "Vo istinê voskres," "He is indeed

risen." A story is told of the Emperor Nicholas, who, on passing a sentry on guard, called out the usual "Christos voskres." The soldier answered with a gloomy countenance, "Not at all, your Imperial Majesty." The Emperor paused in amazement and demanded an explanation. "I am a Jew, please your Majesty," continued the soldier, anxiously. "Ah! all right, then," replied the Emperor, and gave the man a handsome Easter present. On Easter-day the streets are thronged with carriages containing functionaries of all grades in their uniforms and orders, all hurrying to pay their formal Easter visit to friends, relations, and superiors. On no other day are so many tipsy people to be seen. Fortunately the Russian is seldom made violent or quarrelsome by his extra potations; he is on such occasions melancholy and affectionate, but never unmindful of the respect due to his superiors. At no other season of the year is illness so prevalent as at Easter.

On the second day of the Whitsuntide holidays the Summer Garden was formerly the scene of the so-called "Bride-Show." According to ancient custom, youths and maidens of the tradesman class assembled here in great numbers, some to admire, the others to be admired. The girls, in their very best attire, stood in a row, and their equally resplendent mothers mounted guard behind them; whilst the young men marched up and down; and those who were inclined

to matrimony looked out a promising and attractive bride. A would-be suitor could not, according to etiquette, personally express any feelings with which his inspection of this show of beauties might have inspired him; and negotiations were carried on exclusively through the *swasha* or matrimonial go-between. This curious practice has lately fallen into desuetude; and if matches are still made up among the many smartly-dressed young people who frequent the Summer Garden on the usual day, matters are now conducted in a less business-like manner.

Another institution, common alike to the capital and the meanest village, is the Vapour Bath, corresponding in its main features with the Turkish Bath, now common in England. The constant use of this cannot fail to be beneficial to the people, who, whatever the dirt of their clothes and habitations may be, are, at all events, thoroughly clean in their persons, at least once a week. Before the great fasts, before Holy Communion, before Confession, and on other occasions, a bath is considered imperative.

In the government of St. Petersburg, which contains 1,326,875 inhabitants, there are about a million members of the Orthodox Church, a few thousand Old Believers, and three hundred and fifty Armenian Christians. The remainder of the population includes Roman Catholics, Lutherans, a few members of the

English Church, Jews, and Mohammedans. These strangers are chiefly merchants, members of learned professions, shopkeepers, and skilled artisans.

The whole environs of St. Petersburg and the islands of the Neva are dotted with the country houses and villas (*Datsche*) of the St. Petersburgers; and during the summer months the city is all but deserted. Even the most insignificant Post-office clerk must needs "go out of town." If his means do not allow of anything better, he hires a couple of rooms, or perhaps one room only, that looks out on some wood or garden; and there he and his family enjoy the long days of the brief summer. Mr. Harrison [1] remarks: "These country boxes or *datchas*, as they are called, testify to a practice almost universal in Russian cities—that of making a change of residence (*datcha* means change) during the summer months."

The Imperial Family possess several summer palaces in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg. Peterhof, on the Gulf of Cronstadt, about seventeen miles from the capital, built in imitation of Versailles, was begun by Peter I., and added to by the Empress Elizabeth and the Empress Catherine II. Architecturally, it is far inferior to the creation of Louis XIV., but it has great advantages in point of

[1] "Nine Years' Residence in Russia," p. 17.

situation, standing as it does on a terraced elevation overlooking the open sea. In a secluded portion of the park is a small wooden house, once a favourite resort of Peter the Great, whence he used to watch the progress of his fleet and of the fortress he was erecting on the opposite island of Kotlin, to protect the mouth of the Neva from the Swedes. This fortress Kronschlot (Kronstadt), which nature and art have combined to make impregnable, is about eighteen miles from St. Petersburg, and defends the actual harbour of the capital, and the vast docks of Peter the Great, with the shipbuilding-yards, where all the ships of the line are built.

Tsarskoé-Selo, fifteen miles south of St. Petersburg, another imperial summer palace of enormous dimensions, was completed by Catherine II. The interior decorations are of the costliest description: rooms whose walls are inlaid with malachite and lapis-lazuli; floors of mother-of-pearl and ebony; columns of jaspar, porphyry, and agate; statues in bronze and marble; Gobelin tapestries; Chinese, Turkish, and Persian chambers; all tell of the lavish magnificence of the great Empress. The story goes that Catherine invited the French Ambassador to come and inspect her work on its completion. Escorted by the Empress, he carefully examined the contents of the building, and on leaving it, stopped short, and began to look

inquiringly around. "What are you looking for?" asked Catherine. "Your Majesty," answered the polite courtier, "I am looking for the glass case which is to cover this jewel."

St. Petersburg can hardly be called a Russian city, nor its customs Russian customs. Mr. Carrington[1] goes so far as to say that "one might complete a work on Russian topics without any mention of St. Petersburg." The object which Peter the Great had in founding it, to make "a window by which the Russians might look into civilized Europe," has been amply fulfilled; for the window has become a door through which French and other foreign influences have entered into the Empire. The inhabitants, especially the upper classes, cultivate foreign literature, catch a foreign tone, live a foreign life, and adopt foreign manners and customs.[2] And according to Mr. Wallace[3] "every intellectual movement which has appeared in Russia during the last century and a half has been the reflection of some movement in France or Germany." The city is the centre of the regeneration of the Empire according to the Great Peter's design.[4] There the Russian and the stranger have met and mingled; and the Russian has cast away many of his old prejudices, and adopted from the stranger much that is useful and good.

[1] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 218.
[2] "Ivan at Home," p. 312. [3] Vol. ii. p. 148. [4] Rambaud, vol. ii. p. 47.

CHAPTER VII.

FINLAND AND NORTH RUSSIA.

Configuration of the Country—The Finns—Conquest of Finland—Agriculture—Character of the People—Clergy—Helsingfors—Revel—Sveaborg—Shores of the White Sea—English Ships in the Dwina—Archangel—Solovetsk—Nova Zembla—The Tundras—Fisheries—The Zyryans—The Samoyedes—Religion—Weddings—Karelians.

THE Grand Duchy of Finland has been called the Switzerland of Russia; and to the traveller who, after a journey of only 60 or 70 miles, finds himself transported from the swampy plains of St. Petersburg to the lichen-covered rocks, barren stone fields, and gloomy woods of Finland, the change in the scenery seems, in some respects, to justify the comparison. Finland is principally a table-land of granite, from 400 to 600 feet above the sea level, out of which rise hills of no great height, except in the north, where the Manselha Mountains have an elevation of between twelve and thirteen hundred feet.

Finland is a country, more especially in the south and east, of lakes and rivers, of foaming cataracts and silvery waterfalls; of frowning cliffs near the sea, and primeval forests inland; a wild northern

region, where nature assumes features of stern grandeur, that differ widely from her aspect in more southern lands. The original configuration of the country has been modified by the action of vast masses of water flowing from the north-west in a south-easterly direction. The effects of the forces then in operation are still to be clearly discerned in the course and formation of the valleys; in the accumulations of detritus with which they are partially filled; and in the moraines, dykes, fissures, and water-worn rocks with which the country abounds.

The word "Finn" is derived from a Gothic word signifying a swamp. It is not the name by which the Finlanders, or Laplanders, know themselves; but is the term by which they are known to the Northmen.[1] The Finlanders still call themselves Suomelaisset, inhabitants of the marshes; and their country Suomen-maa, or land of lakes and marshes, from "Suo," a swamp; but the Russians term the Finns "Tchouds," strangers, and the Swedes call them "Qvaen."

The Finns in early times were forced by the encroachments of more powerful Slav and German tribes to relinquish their more southern dwelling-places, and to retire further and further towards the north, until nothing remained to them but

[1] Dr. Smith's "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography."

the extreme north, then tenanted by tribes of Lapps.

The descriptions given by Tacitus, in whose writings we first meet with the name "Fenni," identical with the "Phinni" of Ptolemy, are applicable, not by any means to the present inhabitants of Finland, who brought with them from their earlier homes some rudiments of civilization, but to those Lapps who were mere savages. The Finns were an unwarlike race, and opposed but a feeble resistance to the inroads of the neighbouring Swedes and Russians, who deprived them of their independence, and by whom they were converted to Christianity.

The successes of Birger Jarl, in 1249, and of Thorkel Knutson, in 1293, acquired for Sweden Tavastland and Karelia, and later wars completed the Swedish conquest of the whole of the present Finland.

On the other hand, the Russians had, since 1517, acquired possession of the tract of country that extends from the Volga to Siberia, and had received the allegiance of the thirteen head Finnish tribes. Peter the Great, in 1714, conquered East Finland (Karelia), which was permanently secured to him, in 1721, at the peace of Nystadt.

In September, 1809, the peace of Frederikshamn deprived Sweden of West Finland and of Lapland, and ceded them, together with the islands of Aland, to Russia. Finland, however, was allowed to retain her

constitution and tribunals, and to continue in the free exercise of the Lutheran religion, which she had adopted whilst under Swedish domination. In 1863, the late Emperor, Alexander II., presided at the re-opening of the Finnish Landstag, which had not been called together since 1809; and under his presidency the incorporation of Finland into the Russian Empire was formally ratified.

The climate of Finland is severe, but healthy on the coasts; even in the south the winter lasts, at the least, six months. In the north, during the short summer, when the sun is almost always above the horizon, the heat is often great; and "near Uleaborg, in about the sixty-fifth degree of north latitude, the corn is sown and reaped within six or seven weeks."[1] At Helsingfors, the annual mean temperature is 38·7 Fahrenheit; that of the winter months, December, January, and February, 20·5; and of the summer, June, July, and August, 59·0.[2]

Finland is poor in minerals. Some few iron and copper mines yield profitable returns, and the marble and granite quarries give employment to a certain number of the population. The red granite, so plentifully used at St. Petersburg, comes from the quarries of Pitterlax on the Gulf of Finland.

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[1] McCulloch's "Geographical Dictionary."
[2] "Murray's Handbook," p. 68.

The tomb of Napoleon I., in the Invalides, at Paris, is composed of the same marble. The more valuable green and white marble, with which the famous church of St. Isaac is faced, was brought from the quarries of Serdobol, on Lake Ladoga.

The main industries of the country are agriculture, cattle breeding, and the fisheries. Pine forests extend as far as 69° of north latitude; the soil, though fertile, is not well cultivated. Rye and barley are the chief crops, the rye of Vasa being celebrated for its excellence. The humidity of the atmosphere obliges the peasants to kiln-dry all the grain. From Uleaborg to Torneo, however, it is but once in the course of several years that a tolerable harvest can be secured; and throughout this district only oats, potatoes (introduced in 1762), and turnips are grown. The pasturage is good, and sufficient to support horses, cattle, and sheep in considerable numbers, and in the north there are large herds of reindeer.

Of manufactures, excepting a few cotton factories, iron forges, and sail-cloth factories, the country can boast but few. They are chiefly domestic, the peasant making all that he requires for his own use. From such seaport towns as Abo, Uleaborg, and Torneo a considerable export trade is carried on in timber, potash, tar, pitch, hides, butter, salted fish, and in

the tanned skins of young reindeer, for the manufacture of the so-called Swedish gloves. The imports are grain, salt, metals, tobacco, and colonial produce. Russian currency is established by law, but Swedish paper money is also used. The sea is the great highway from one part of Finland to another; the internal means of communication consist of the line of railway from St. Petersburg by Wiborg and Tavastehus to Helsingfors, which is being continued to Tammerfors and Abo; and of the network of lakes, connected with the sea by the Saima canal, by means of which ships from North Finland now reach Wiborg and St. Petersburg. This canal, a great national work, was completed by the Swedish engineer Erichsen in the year 1856, at a cost of about £400,000; it is 54½ miles in length, with a minimum depth of 9 feet, and a minimum breadth of 31½ feet, and 28 locks; and is navigable by steamers drawing not more than 6½ feet.

The roads, which do not extend into the interior, were made by the Swedes when they possessed the land, and though few in number are excellent. The small, active post-horses of the country, furnished, as in Sweden, by the farmers, carry the traveller over them at a rapid pace. With regard to the inhabitants, it may be said that the upper classes are of Swedish origin and retain the use of the Swedish language, and that the Russians compose less than

two per cent. of the population.[1] In the seaboard towns of South Finland the German element asserts itself strongly, but the peasant is everywhere a genuine Finn.

The drunken, dirty, beggarly Finn that is met with in Pargoala, and other villages in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Petersburg, is a being of an essentially different and very inferior stamp. In Finland, a drunken man, a cripple, a beggar, or an overdriven horse, are sights but very rarely to be seen. The Finnish peasant is remarkably upright, industrious, and religious; his honesty is proverbial, and his hospitality most ungrudging. But it must be confessed that he is often self-willed, obstinate, and suspicious, and, it is said, revengeful. His detractors aver that a Finn will let himself be struck dead sooner than retract, yield, or confess; hence arise innumerable lawsuits, which are instituted about mere trifles, and are carried on to extremities.

The peasant is generally of lean and muscular make, of middle height, flat-faced, with prominent cheek-bones; his complexion is sallow; his eyes are small and grey; his hair is flaxen, inclining to red; his beard scanty, and generally cut close. His dress is similar to that of the Swedish peasant; a grey jacket with brass buttons, or a long, loose coat, of

[1] Wallace's "Russia," vol. ii., p. 426.

woollen manufacture, fastened round the waist with a silken girdle. The women have a garb chiefly remarkable for the great number of metal buttons, rings, and other appendages with which it is adorned; and wear round the head a leathern strap studded with yellow buttons. Their shirts are either gaily striped or plain red; indeed, red is the prevailing colour throughout the country; bridges, signposts, palings, roofs, the women's dresses, the men's waistcoats, all are red. The habit of smoking prevails largely, and every male, from the boy to the decrepid old man, has a thoroughly blackened, well-seasoned pipe constantly in his mouth.

The amusements of the Finn consist chiefly in feats of bodily strength and activity, and, excepting in the towns, where the Swedes have influenced them, they have no taste for dancing or games of chance. Mr. McCulloch describes them as grave and rather unsocial, and adds that almost every one is a poet or musician.

In the main the population is poor; butter, milk, potatoes and salt fish are the ordinary fare; white bread is a luxury, its place being taken by a sort of hard ship's biscuit, which is baked only a few times a year. A hole is bored through each biscuit, and the whole store is suspended by means of a cord from the ceiling of the room. Every peasant, even the very poorest, can read and write; and every-

where throughout the country the happiest relations exist between the clergy and the people. With the exception of the Russian population, who inhabit chiefly the government of Friborg and are of the Russian Church, the people are Lutherans, holding to the Confession of Augsburg and to the episcopal form of government which prevails in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. For his pastor, who is not only the parish priest, but the doctor, the lawyer, the magistrate, and the schoolmaster of the district, the Finnish peasant entertains the highest possible respect, and to him he applies for counsel and advice on all the important occasions of his life.

The clergy are, as a rule, well paid. In some parts there are cures worth £600 a year, but in the far north the incomes in many cases do not exceed £100 a year. In every parish there is a parsonage house, built at the expense of the parishioners, which is always a suitable, convenient, and sufficiently roomy dwelling. The greatest hospitality is exercised by the clergy; indeed the entertaining of strangers is one of the traditional duties of their office. In the most remote places, at whatever time the traveller may arrive, he is sure of a friendly reception at the parsonage. But even in these more refined households the brandy bottle is never long absent. Not only at meal-times, but before dinner and between dinner and supper, brandy, either plain or

in the form of punch, is pressed by the host on his guest.

The villages in Finland are so scattered that it is only on Sundays that the population can be collected for the offices of religion; and it is no uncommon thing for the pastor to have to celebrate marriage, baptize, and to bury, in addition to performing the ordinary services of the day. Finland is rich in national poetry. Elias Lönnrot, a learned Finlander, perambulated the country and made a very full collection of songs, legends, and folk-lore, which has been published under the name of "Kalevala;" it is so called from the land of Kaleva, the land of plenty, where the heroes lived. Grimm declares that many of the poems in this collection may compare with the Homeric epics in faithful portraiture of nature and in fertility of invention.

The towns of Finland are not of much importance. Helsingfors, was founded by Gustavus Wasa in the 16th century, and was made the capital by order of Queen Christina in 1642. It stands at the entrance of the Gulf of Finland, almost facing the ancient town of Revel on the Esthonian coast, upon bare granite rocks, over which pale mosses and scanty patches of brushwood scarcely cast a tinge of verdure; a town without a history and without a past, whose broad streets, spacious squares, and handsome state buildings have arisen by order; and

whose whole life is new, a very St. Petersburg in miniature. Helsingfors now only exists for and by strangers; with the first spring steamboat it awakes, with the last glass of mineral water drunk in its "Vauxhall" it goes to sleep again. Even the University, removed from Åbo in 1827, does not avail to put life into the town during the winter months, for the Finnish student is the most grave and sedate of the undergraduate race.

The town had, in 1878, 36,090 inhabitants, but the summer visitors swell this number considerably. The invalids and strangers entertain themselves as best they can. There is a library of 80,000 volumes and there are various museums. Swedish swings, which are provided in abundance, afford a harmless and very popular amusement; and morning dances are got up for the diversion of the ladies, who dance away merrily in their hats and walking dresses. On Sunday mornings many of them go straight from the dancing-room to church! About a mile and a half from Helsingfors, and to the south-east, stands the rock fortress of Sveaborg, the bulwark of South Finland. It is built on seven of those low rocky islets termed "skares," a belt of which encircles the greater portion of the Finnish coast; and commands the Gustav Sound, the only channel navigable by large vessels. The largest islet, on which are the chief defences, the

house of the commandant, the barracks, and the magazines, is called Wargo, Wolf's Island.

Sveaborg was erected by the Swedish general Ehrenswärd, who was not only a military engineer but also a composer of idyllic poetry. Notwithstanding its strong position and artificial defences the fortress capitulated in 1808 to a handful of Russians, who laid siege to it during the exceptionally long and hard winter of that year, with a force of only four battalions of infantry and 400 cavalry. During the Crimean war, in 1854, Sveaborg was bombarded by the allied fleets under the command of Admiral Dundas and Admiral Penaud. The fortress of Kymmene, at the mouth of the river of the same name, has barracks for 14,000 men, and a spacious harbour for ships of war.

In annexing Finland, Russia left to the inhabitants a large power of self-administration. The inhabitants of Finland proper have their own officials, coinage, and custom-houses, and special laws of military and naval service, as well as a special scheme of finance and budget.[1] Mr. Wallace states[2] that "Russia's power of expansion has been much greater than her power of assimilation;" that "wherever the Russians and the foreign race are in different stages of economic development, as, for example, where the one are

[1] "Statesman's Year-Book," p. 378. [2] Vol. ii., p. 427.

agriculturists and the other lead a pastoral life, no amalgamation has taken place ;" and that "where no such economic obstacles exist, an equally efficient barrier is often formed by religion ;" "the Mahometans, the Roman Catholics, and the Protestants never becoming Russians in the full sense of the term."

To the east of Finland, and separated from it by no natural boundary, lie the most northern governments of Russia proper, Archangel, Olonetz, and Vologda.

The tribes inhabiting the shores of the White Sea and the districts watered by the Dwina and its affluents were conquered and made subjects of Novgorod the Great in the eleventh century ; and in the following century John, Archbishop of Novgorod, founded a monastery on the coast of the White Sea, dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel. In 1499, Ivan the Great, who had reduced Novgorod to the Muscovite rule, took possession of this and other of her colonies, and made further conquests in Northern Russia. In 1553, Sir Richard Chancellor, who commanded a ship of the English merchant adventurers, landed at Kholmogori, then the chief town of the White Sea ; and learning with astonishment that he was on the territory of the Tsar of Moscow, left at once for that city, and delivered to Ivan the Terrible the letters which Edward the VI. of England had

addressed vaguely to the authorities of the countries in which his subjects might chance to land. He met with a friendly reception; and having succeeded in negotiating a treaty of commerce between Russia and England, sailed for England, having with him on board Osip Nepei, the Governor of Vologda, who was sent as ambassador to the English Court. Chancellor perished and nearly all his crew, in a shipwreck off the Scottish coast; but Osip Nepei reached London in safety, and was received with many demonstrations of respect in 1557. From this time forward English ships visited Northern Russia; and the English merchants established a trading station, near to the monastery of St. Michael, which in 1584 had developed into theco mmercial city of St. Michael the Archangel, or, more shortly, Archangel, the only place of maritime commerce existing in Russia previously to the founding of St. Petersburg. Peter the Great, who at first fostered the rising city, wished afterwards to suppress it for the benefit of his new port, and raised the tariff of customs at Archangel by a fourth. But the sagacious Empress Catharine removed the burden, and Archangel soon regained its former position. The port is now annually visited by 800 vessels, of which, 200 are British. The export trade of grain, flax, tar, timber, and blubber is valued at £1,000,000 sterling; but the import trade is small.[1]

[1] "Murray's Handbook to Russia."

"The population is said to be from fifteen to seventeen thousand in winter, increasing in summer to about half as many more."[1] The town having been from the first built mostly of wood has been burnt down many times, and no less than seven times between the years 1724 and 1793. The palace of the Archbishop, built in 1784, is one of the oldest surviving houses.[2] Archangel possesses twenty churches, an ancient monastery, a church seminary, a gymnasium, and a naval school. The one considerable street, which is composed partly of stone and partly of wooden buildings, extends for over two miles along the quay of the Dwina to the island and harbour of Solombola. In it are situated the principal warehouses, stores, and shops, almost all of which bear either German or English names. The soil of Solombola is of a peculiar description, being composed of earth brought from various places as ballast by foreign ships, and turned to account to give solidity to the swampy banks of the Dwina.

The famous monastery of Solovetsk stands on the largest of the three islands called by that name and situated in the White Sea, in latitude 65° north. This island measures fifteen miles in length by ten in breadth, and is only accessible from the

[1] "Siberia in Europe," p. 16.

[2] "Murray's Handbook to Russia."

middle of May until the middle of September. Talc is its principal product. About 30,000 pilgrims from all parts of the empire assemble annually at Archangel to visit the monastery, whither they are conveyed by a steamer belonging to and manned by the monks. The fare charged for the double journey is very low, and the poorest pilgrims are conveyed gratis; each pilgrim is also, according to ancient custom, boarded and lodged for three days in an inn belonging to the Monastery. On each of the many elevated points of the Holy Island, on which the monastery stands, rises a white-washed church, with a green cupola, and on the highest point of all stands a lighthouse.

The massive monastic buildings are surrounded by a wall, which skirts the shore, and is armed with some antique cannon. Like many other establishments of the same class, its foundation is popularly associated with a miracle. But according to the most authentic accounts, the monastery was founded by St. Sabbatheus, assisted by two monks, Germanicus and Zosimus, who came from Novgorod to seek retirement on the islands in the White Sea. In 1429 a cross was erected on the largest island; and by 1442 the monastery had increased in wealth and power, and was endowed with lands by the Archbishop and the Governor of Novgorod. The heathen Lapps, who had hitherto enjoyed undisturbed posses-

sion of this lonely spot, showed their hostility to the new comers in various vexatious ways. But at last the Abbot Jonas succeeded in securing undisturbed possession of the islands, and the monks occupied themselves in turning their extensive domains to good account by their own manual labour, obtaining wood and timber from their forests, and food from their fisheries.

In 1654, when the Metropolitan Nikon, under the auspices of the Tsar, undertook the reformation of the Church books and the Church ceremonies, he encountered much opposition amongst the clergy, both "Black and White," which resulted in a serious schism. In 1667 many refractory priests were banished to Solovetsk, a most unfortunate measure, for the exiles imbued the monks with their own ideas, and induced them also to reject the innovations. It was not long before the whole establishment was in open revolt, and in 1699 the fanatical agitators having got the power entirely into their own hands refused all compromise. Relying on the strong walls of their monastery, on their 90 cannon, and on the fact that they possessed abundant supplies of ammunition and of provisions, and a garrison of from 500 to 600 men, they considered themselves in a position to extort their own terms. The rebellion lasted nine years; till at last, in 1676, Prince John Mestcherski, the

Voévode, after a two years' siege, made his way into the monastery through a secret passage, the existence of which had been betrayed by one of the monks themselves. The garrison offered a desperate resistance, but were finally overmastered and received well-merited punishment. At the present time 135 monks dwell within the monastery precincts, under an archimandrite; together with fifty officers who have charge of the prisoners, and 120 free labourers. The establishment is one of the wealthiest in Russia in church plate, and vestments, and jewelled Ikons. The monks employ their leisure time in painting sacred pictures, carving in wood, knitting stockings, spinning hemp and flax, tanning leather, and in weaving baskets, and in other kindred pursuits.

At the time of the Crimean war, two English men-of-war appeared off the Solovetsk Islands. The monks, amid the ringing of every available bell, and the firing of many harmless shots from the island fortifications, marched in procession round the monastery, singing hymns and offering prayers for deliverance. The English ships soon took their departure; and, as the retreat was attributed to the action of the monks, the fame of the monastery became greater and more widely spread. The Grand Duke Constantine, with two of his sons, has made a pilgrimage to it, and the Emperor Alexander II. honoured it with a visit.

One other portion of this northern part of Europe, dependent on Russia, remains for notice, Nova Zembla, "the New Land;" which consists of two islands lying in the Arctic Ocean, to the north of the mouth of the river Petchora, and one of the most inhospitable districts of an inhospitable region. The ice, which during the summer months drifts along the Siberian coasts, under the influence of the current which flows from east to west, accumulates in the Karskie Vorota Strait, which separates Nova Zembla from the more southern island of Vaigatch, and bars the passage to ships seeking to enter it from the west. The great Siberian rivers, the Ob and the Yenisei, also discharge the ice with which they are covered until June, into the Sea of Kara, and fill it with drifting bergs. It is, in consequence, by no means surprising that the eastern shores of Nova Zembla had been, until 1833, almost unexplored; although the configuration of the western coasts, first made known by Stephen Burrough in 1556, had long been accurately mapped out.

Between 1819 and 1824 the Russian Government sent out five successive expeditions into the Sea of Kara, and several others in later years. But it was not until the year 1871 that Captain Johannesen successfully circumnavigated Nova Zembla; and discovered the eastern shores to be low and barren.

The western side of Nova Zembla consists of

rocky heights, which rise from the shore to 1,000 to 2,000 feet, and in other parts attain a height of from 3,000 to 4,000 feet, and are reckoned by some the northern spur of the Ural mountains, though the continuity of the chain is broken by the intervening sea. Further to the north, where the mountains decrease in height, the valleys open out more towards the sea, and are filled with glaciers ; but the southern coasts are flat.

The fact that Nova Zembla is utterly uninhabited, except in summer, when walrus hunters frequent its coasts, must be ascribed more to deficiency of warmth than to extremity of cold ; for the winters are by no means so severe as those experienced in many inhabited portions of Siberia and of North America, the mean temperature in January being 3° Fahrenheit. On the other hand the summer temperature is much lower, the mean of July being 39° Fahrenheit. It is the comparatively high summer temperature of other high latitudes that renders them favourable to animal and vegetable life.

The government of Archangel has an area of 325,236 square miles, excluding the lakes, which measure about 6,215 square miles ; of this vast area barely a thousandth part is under cultivation, and only 281,000 inhabitants are found in it.

The larger portion of this region is very sterile. Cereals are cultivated up to the sixty-first degree

of north latitude, and in favoured spots up to the sixty-third degree; but the crops in this higher latitude are uncertain. Still further to the north the pines and larches and birches of the enormous forests diminish in size, and give place to stunted brushwood, which gradually disappears; and extensive tracts, clothed with scanty grass, mosses, and plants bearing edible berries, lie between the forest regions and the icy marshes of the Tundras. "These tundras are naked tracts of slightly undulating land, rolling prairies of moor, swamp, and bog; full of lakes, and abounding with reindeer moss, upon which the reindeer feed."[1] In winter these are frozen, and covered with snow; in summer they are quite impassable for horses, though easily traversed by reindeer.[2]

The portion of the northern boundary of the government of Archangel, which is washed by the Arctic Ocean, and extends from the Varanger Fiord in 30° east longitude to the river Kara, is a gloomy desert, with only one small town, Kola, the most northern settlement in European Russia. This town is, in spring, the centre of cod and turbot and herring fisheries, which give employment to about 1,500 men.

The White Sea has an area which is estimated at 45,000 square miles. The entrance to it is formed by

[1] Seebohm's "Siberia in Europe," p. 16. [2] Ibid., p. 25.

Cape Sviatoi on the west and Cape Kanin on the east; on the north-west it forms the gulf of Kandalak; and on the south the gulfs of Onega and Archangel, which abound in herring and cod-fish, of which large quantities are annually exported.

The bays of Mezen and Tsheskaya bound the marshy and desolate peninsula of Kanin, on the coasts of which the Samoyedes and the Russians from Mezen display considerable activity in hunting seals and walruses. Beyond the Bay of Tsheskaya, opposite to which lies the uninhabited island of Kolguef, the tundras extend uninterruptedly to the mouth of the Petchora, and far into Siberia.

The northern portion of the Ural mountains divides the governments of Archangel and Vologda from Siberia, and is the watershed from which the Kara and the Petchora flow towards Europe and the Ob towards Asia.

These northern rivers all possess the same chief characteristics. Taking their rise in the swamps, with which, as well as with forests, the northern portions of the mountains are covered, they at first flow sluggishly in narrow and shallow beds; but as their volume is increased by the accession of tributary streams, they become more rapid, and hollow out for themselves deeper and wider channels, and finally either disappear as they arose in some swamp, or

fall into the sea amid a labyrinth of shallows and sandbanks.

The Petchora is the most important river of the government of Archangel; but throughout its course of 900 miles not one single town or village deserving of mention is to be met with on its banks. Its principal affluents are the Ishma from the south and the Ussa from the east. The chief wealth of the country consists in its vast forests; and the damage done by chance fires, produced either by lightning or by the carelessness of some hunter, is enormous, the conflagration extending for miles.

The government of Vologda has an area of 155,492 square miles, and a population of 1,003,039. The country is mostly sandy or marshy, except where it is covered with forests. In the south-western districts the soil is fertile, but as the climate is very severe, rye and barley are the only grain cultivated. The chief mineral products of this district are copper, iron, marble, and salt,[1] of which there are large mines at Totma, the capital. The other towns are not much worthy of notice, though some of them boast of Government factories and iron foundries. Vologda, on the river of the same name, is mentioned as early as the twelfth century. Kholmogori, on the northern Dwina,

[1] Keith Johnston.

gave birth to the poet Lomonossof, and is the place to which the deposed Empress Regent, Anna Karlovna, and her husband, Anthony Ulrich of Brunswick, were banished by the Empress Elizabeth.

The government of Olonetz has an area of 57,437 square miles, and a population of 296,000. It abounds in marshes and picturesque lakes, of which Onega, above 140 miles in length and from 30 to 45 broad, is, next to Lake Ladoga, the largest in Europe. The large forests, with which the country is covered, are its principal wealth.

The non-Russian inhabitants of the northern governments consist of the Zyryans, the Karelians, the Lapps, the Samoyedes, and of a few still surviving Tchouds.

The Zyryans inhabit the government of Archangel ; and the allied tribes of Pernayäks and Volyäks Perm and Viatka. The Zyryans are, next to the Russians, the most intelligent and enterprising of the population. They possess fixed habitations and are in fairly comfortable circumstances, devoting themselves chiefly to hunting, fishing, and to breeding reindeer. In former times their honesty was proverbial, and locks and bolts were unknown throughout their settlements ; but, thanks to their intercourse with Russian traders, their character has of late years considerably deteriorated in this respect. Robbery

however, from one of their "shelter huts" is still a rare offence.

These shelters, called "Simovoya," are an institution peculiar to these districts. To obviate some of the dangers consequent on the great distances that divide the various settlements, places of shelter have been erected for the benefit of strangers or weather-bound travellers. Alongside the hut a huge basket is usually placed, in which the hunters and villagers deposit game or other provisions, which those who seek the shelter of the huts are at liberty to consume, on the understanding that an equivalent of some sort is left in exchange.

When the Zyryans set off in spring on their fishing expeditions they provide themselves with groats, meal, salt, kitchen and other utensils, and leave their houses under the charge of the women of the family. On the spot selected as the head-quarters of their operations rough wooden huts are erected, and here they spend the summer. In the autumn they return with earnings averaging not more than £9 to £12 a man. Another industry is the collection of the nuts of the *pinus cembra*, of which in a favourable season from 300 lb. to 400 lb. can be collected by one man. Of later years the Zyryans have devoted special attention to the breeding of reindeer. In fine weather the herds are entrusted to the care of a Samoyede shepherd, but

during rain, fog, and snow the owner spends day and night in his little Siberian sledge, and with his dogs mounts guard over his reindeer himself. Some possess herds numbering from 6,000 to 7,000, of which 1,500 or thereabouts are slaughtered every autumn, when the skins are in the best condition for dressing. The annual profit on such a herd amounts to about £900 sterling; some Zyryan Rothschilds possess a capital of from £4,200 to £7,000.

The Samoyedes, numbering not more than 6,000 or 7,000, inhabit the eastern portion of the government of Archangel, and are almost at the bottom of the scale of civilization; the Lapps, numbering about 2,000, inhabit its western portion. Both tribes are diminishing year by year, and will probably be extinct in European Russia before long.

The dwellings of the Samoyedes consist of a circular hut composed of a framework of long poles, over which are stretched either birch-bark mats or reindeer skins, according to the time of year. A circular opening at the top affords exit to the smoke from the fire in the centre of the tent. The portion of the tent directly opposite to the entrance, is considered in a fashion sacred; and as the Samoyedes hold women to be unclean, no woman may set foot on or touch this spot; and if such a catastrophe should unfortunately happen, it is remedied by the casting

of a live coal on the place, for "fire makes all things clean."

They live on fish, game, and berries, but chiefly upon reindeer, eating the raw and steaming flesh, and drinking the blood, of the newly-slaughtered animal. Men, women, and even children consume tobacco and brandy largely; and the Russian merchants turn the fondness of the Samoyedes for these luxuries to good account in bartering with them for their surplus reindeer skins, horns, and other articles. The wealth of a Samoyede consists in the number of his reindeer. The rearing and pasturage of them is his chief occupation; but it is varied in summer by shooting birds, whose feathers can be bartered to the Russian merchants, and by making his clothes and the harness and fittings for his sledges.

The Samoyedes are a Mongolian race, and their exterior is not much more attractive than are their native tundras. They are short and stunted-looking, with broad cheeks, flat noses, small eyes, a very low forehead, black shaggy hair and scanty beards. In character they are gloomy and apathetic; and, being inferior to the Russians in acuteness and intelligence, they are harassed by the continual attempts of their more sharp-witted and unscrupulous neighbours to overreach them.

Although they are for the most part nominally Christians, sorcery and magic, analogous to the

Tartar Shamanism, which exists throughout the whole extreme north, prevails among them to a considerable extent. They believe in a divine being, "Numa," who protects the herds, and dispenses thunder, lightning, rain, and sunshine. The stars are his members, and the rainbow is the hem of his garment. But as this being dwells far away, they seek counsel from their idols, "Chage," or from the spirits of whom the Shamane, that is, the magician, is the mouthpiece. On the island of Vaigatch are a number of these idols, roughly hewn colossal stone figures, clothed in reindeer skins and adorned with bits of sparkling metal.

The Shamanes, or Tadibs, that is, sorcerers or magicians, prescribe for the body as well as for the soul. Their first question to a patient invariably is whether he knows of any enemy who may have caused his malady; if he can give no satisfactory answer they decide that Numa himself has sent the illness, and that no remedy is likely to prove efficacious.

The women are generally married very young, about the age of thirteen. The marriage is arranged in the first instance between the youth and the damsel of his choice by a go-between; and when the dowry has been considered and satisfactorily arranged by the relatives of the young pair, and the *Shamane* or magician has done his part, eating and drinking

ratify the marriage; "after the marriage festivities are over the young couple are left alone in the *choom*, or tent of the bride's father. It is customary for the bridegroom to present his bride with the skin of a black fox. The girl's father gives his son-in-law a *choom*, with all its appurtenances, and five, ten, twenty, or thirty reindeer, according to his wealth. If the bridegroom be rich, he gives his father-in-law money to the amount sometimes of two hundred roubles."[1] Mr. Seebohm states that "since the adoption of the Russian faith by the Samoyedes they bury their dead."

The Lapps, who inhabit the north of Finland, form a special division of the Finnish race, and, according to Mr. Wallace, number about 4,000 souls. They are a diminutive race, and, though they dwell in villages, are both morally and intellectually superior to the Samoyedes, with whom they have much in common. They are professedly of the Russian Church; and constant intercourse with the Russians is gradually depriving them of most of their national characteristics.

The Karelians, who number about 30,000 and are all of the Russian Church, are found chiefly in the government of Oloretz, and in the southern part of the government of Archangel; but a few are settled in

[1] Seebohm's "Siberia in Europe," p. 75.

some villages of the governments of St. Petersburg, Novgorod, and Tver, and are rapidly becoming Russianized. In Oloretz, however, where railways and telegraphs have not penetrated, the ancient patriarchal customs of their forefathers are still adhered to. They live sometimes in villages, which all wear an air of prosperity; sometimes in groups of two or three families only, far in the desert wilds, on the shores of some stream or lake that affords good fishing, or where a patch of fruitful soil offers more than ordinary agricultural advantages.

The life of the women in the extreme north is lonely and monotonous. For six months in the year the men are absent pursuing their various callings on the coasts of Lapland and on the White Sea, in the forests or on the tundras; and the women are left to get in the hay, to take care of the cattle, and to manage all the home affairs. Their chief diversions take place during the Christmas and following weeks; they then meet at each other's homes—each guest bringing her needlework or her spinning, and her own light—and enliven their tasks with songs and stories, which are generally of a religious tone. These neighbourly meetings come to an end on the Saturday before "Butter-week." The Sunday corresponding with the Western Quinquagesima is, in the Eastern Church, styled *Cheese-Sunday*, and the week preceding *Cheese-week*; but

in Russia the peasants call it *Butter*-Sunday. The week holds a middle place between an ordinary week and a fast; and cheese and butter which, as well as fish, eggs, oil, and milk, are forbidden in Lent, are eaten up to the conclusion of Cheese-Sunday.

ARCHANGEL.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PLATEAU OF VALDAI.

Description of the Country—Novgorod—Capture of Novgorod by the Muscovites—Pskof—Great Russian Villages—Peasantry—Houses—Manufactories—Customs and Superstitions.

THE Plateau of Valdai, the highest central portion of European Russia and the watershed of the whole country, comprises the whole of the provinces of Novgorod and Tver, and part of the adjoining governments. Mention is often made of the Valdai Hills; but, in point of fact, the higher level of this district is barely perceptible; as the ascent is gradual, and the average height only 800 to 1,000 feet.

Numerous lakes, impassable swamps, and impenetrable forests, are the characteristic features of this region. The axe has been at work, and the amount of moisture has consequently somewhat diminished, but not one-tenth of the soil is as yet under cultivation. It is here that the principal rivers of the country, the Volga, the Western and Northern Dwina and the Dnieper, take their rise; and here the chief

commercial routes which connect Russia with Western Europe meet and intersect.

Here too the earliest germs of Russian civil life were developed; hence Novgorod the Great sent free colonists forth into the forests and morasses of the North, to the shores of the Baltic, to the districts watered by the Volga and the Dnieper, and to the Ural Mountains. Here, in Novgorod, Pskof, Tver, and Vishni Volotchok, Russian commerce first flourished. Through this tract lay the ancient waterway from the Varangians to the Greeks.

The town of Novgorod, called Veliki the Great, to distinguish it from Nijni, the lower, Novgorod, early attained to great importance, and alone amongst Russian cities enjoyed free institutions. Rurik, the first of the Varangian Princes, made it his capital, filled the chief offices of State with his own countrymen, and surrounded himself with a strong Varangian body-guard. During the reign of Rurik's grandson, Yaroslaf, the townspeople rose against the foreigners and destroyed the body-guard almost to a man; whereupon the Prince avenged the death of his countrymen by the execution of the principal citizens. Yaroslaf and his subjects, however, ultimately succeeded in reconciling their differences; and the privileges which he bestowed on the city laid the foundation of its subsequent prosperity. The accounts of Novgorod given by the annalists approach to the

fabulous. Though the population is now only 17,000, it was estimated to contain in the 11th century 100,000 inhabitants. A powerful army numbering, besides foot soldiers, 30,000 horsemen, protected the territories of the republic, which comprised the greater part of Northern Russia, and contained, in addition to the inhabitants of the city, 300,000 subjects. No wonder that in its pride the city chose for its motto, "Who can equal God and great Novgorod?" and styled itself "*My Lord* Novgorod the Great!" Up to the time of its fall, Novgorod was governed nominally by a royal Stadtholder, but he could do nothing without the consent of the senate and of the people. The trade between Novgorod and the Hanseatic towns was entirely in the hands of the Germans,[1]

[1] "The origin of this Hanseatic Confederation," says Mr. Hallam, "is rather obscure, but it may certainly be nearly referred in point of time to the middle of the thirteenth century, and accounted for by the necessity of mutual defence, which piracy by sea and land had taught the merchants of Germany. The nobles endeavoured to obstruct the formation of this league, which indeed was in great measure designed to withstand their exactions. It powerfully maintained the influence which the free imperial cities were at this time acquiring. Eighty of the most considerable places constituted the Hanseatic Confederacy, divided into four colleges, whereof Lubeck, Cologne, Brunswick, and Dantzig were the leading towns. Lubeck held the chief rank, and became, as it were, the patriarchal See of the league, whose province it was to preside in all general discussions for mercantile, political, or military

and their factory in Novgorod was ruled by its own laws, and subject to no interference from the civic government. Its inhabitants were divided into masters, servants, and apprentices; at the head of whom was an alderman with authority over life and death. It contained breweries, mills, warehouses, a church, and various auxiliary buildings, and was surrounded by walls whose gates were closed at night.

In Novgorod the money unit was the "Grivna," a smooth piece of pure silver, from which bits were cut off, and their value calculated by weight. The smaller fragments were called "Otrubki," *i.e.*, cut off, and the larger ones "Roubli," from which the word Rouble, the standard of Russian currency, is derived.

Like Rome of old, Novgorod had its Forum, the Vetche Square. When the Vetche bell rang, the people assembled for open deliberation. This bell was often heard, and played an important part in the story of Novgorod. The chief magistrate of the town, who was chosen by the people, bore the title of the Possadnik; the aristocracy were called Boyards; and below them were an inferior kind of nobility, a guild of merchants, and the *smerdes* or peasants.

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purposes, and to carry them into execution. The league had four principal factories in foreign parts, at London, Bruges, Bergen, and Novgorod; endowed by the sovereigns of these cities with considerable privileges, to which any merchant belonging to a Hanseatic town was entitled."—Hallam's "History of the Middle Ages," vol. iii., p. 325.

Novgorod has been so frequently destroyed by fire, that few monuments of the times of its greatness remain, but the old town walls stand to this day. The most ancient building in Novgorod, probably the oldest church in Russia, is the cathedral of St. Sophia, built of stone, in the eleventh century, somewhat on the model of St. Sophia, at Constantinople. It contains frescoes of the twelfth century, and the tombs of many saints and illustrious people.

The town is divided by the river Volkhof into two parts, connected by a modern bridge of eleven arches. The *Turgovaia*, or market-town, contains the residence of the Governor, most of the mercantile buildings, and an ancient palace of the Tsars; in the *Sophiiskaia*, on the opposite bank, are the citadel, surrounded by a stone wall with many towers, the cathedral of St. Sophia, and the Archbishop's palace. Though the city is now so reduced, it possesses sixty churches and many nunneries and monasteries.

The names of the streets still bear record to its past history. The Voloss street, so called from the heathen god Voloss; the Varangian street, and the Prussian, or Borussian street, tell of the various races that in turn occupied the place.

So great was the might of this free state, that even the Mongols, who subdued the greater portion of Russia, and laid all its chief cities in ashes, did not venture to attack its territories; hence it is that

Novgorod is the only one of the more ancient Russian townson whose churches no crescent is to be seen affixed beneath the cross; an arrangement adopted to signify the final triumph of Christianity over Islam. For 200 years the Muscovite princes vainly endeavoured to subdue the might of Novgorod; but at last the day of its destruction dawned, when Ivan III., in 1470, with an overpowering force, appeared before its gates. The Republican army was defeated, and the Tsar entered the town in triumph, in spite of the heroic defence of the citizens, whom the fiery words of Marfa, widow of the Popadnik, inspired to resistance. All the privileges of the free state were abolished, the Stadtholder was endowed with absolute authority, the heroic Marfa was forced to take the veil, the famous Vetche bell and 300 wagon-loads of gold, silver, and other valuables were carried off to Moscow, and fifty of the richest families, with over one thousand of the principal citizens, were banished to distant parts of Russia.

A hundred years later Novgorod endured fresh miseries at the hands of the bloodthirsty Ivan the Terrible.[1] On the pretext of punishing a plot, which really never existed, he for five whole weeks slaughtered the inhabitants of the city and its environs. Numbers of citizens with their wives and

[1] Wallace, vol. i., p. 288.

children were thrown into the Volhkof, those who were not killed by the fall or drowned, being slain by the soldiers.[1]

Pskof, whose traditions of former freedom also inspired Ivan the Terrible with fear and mistrust, was only saved from a similar fate by the presence of mind of the Saint, Nicholas the Idiot, then held in great repute. The Tsar attended religious service and then visited the cell of Nicholas, who offered him a piece of raw meat. "I am a good Christian," exclaimed the Tsar, "and eat no meat during Lent"! "Thou doest worse," answered the Monk, "for thou feastest upon the flesh and blood of Christians." The chroniclers aver that, at this moment, the sky suddenly became overcast, as before a thunderstorm, and the Tsar, struck with terror, hastened from the spot without carrying his bloody purposes into execution.

The forest regions of Great Russia extend in an almost unbroken expanse over the governments of Novgorod, Tver, Kostroma, and Yaroslaf, far into the government of Archangel. Around the scattered villages, and here and there where charcoal burners are at work, there are clearings; but in the interior of these gigantic woods the stroke of the axe has never

[1] The annalists say that 60,000 perished. Wallace, vol. ii., p. 288.

been heard. There must be many and many a spot in these vast solitudes where even the hunter, who in winter-time traverses hundreds of miles on his snow-shoes, has never penetrated. The ground is almost everywhere swampy, and the roads, where they exist, are passable only during frost, or in the height of summer. And such roads! Raised causeways of wooden logs, over which the traveller passes at foot's pace, as over a shaky bridge, at the risk of at any moment finding his horses floundering in the swamp beneath! No sound of human voice, or human labour, only the notes of birds, the hoarse cries of the raven, and of the crow, the howl of the long-eared owl, and the tapping of the unwearied woodpecker break the death-like stillness.

The whole plain that extends for more than 460 miles between St. Petersburg and Moscow offers no special features. Woods, marshes, and water; here and there, where a slight elevation of the ground renders it more fit for cultivation, a thatched village, with its white church-tower, and its long row of hay and corn-stacks peeping out from among stunted fir-trees, alone diversify the landscape. Formerly the inhabitants of the villages along the high road between St. Petersburg and Moscow were almost without exception, post-boys, and formed a close corporation, endowed with certain privileges. They were, and still are, termed "Yamstschiki," after the

old word Yam (post-station); but since the opening of the railway their occupation is gone.

The villages of Great Russia are of three kinds. *Selo*, a village possessing a church; *Seltzo*, the diminutive, a smaller village; and *Derevnya*, a hamlet without a church.[1] Excepting in the presence or absence of a church, one village is exactly like another. The *Izbas* of the peasants, mere log-houses, are arranged gable-wise along both sides of the road, "the gables fantastically decorated with carvings and pretty fret-work;"[2] there is a large yard at the back; a perforated box at the top of a pole for the starlings or the pigeons, and a shed for cattle, surrounded by a wooden paling with a large wooden gate. Not a flower, not a shrub lends a rustic charm to the village: if there be a church, it alone imparts variety with its white-washed walls and green domes. "At the entrance to the village is a board stating the name of the proprietor, the number of houses, and the number of the inhabitants."[3]

The advantage to be got from a thing is the only question that presents itself to the prosaic mind of the Russian peasant; hence the absence of all comfort and of all beauty in his daily life. His wants are few, and if he can satisfy them he asks no more; even if he acquires comparative wealth by trade or other

[1] Harrison's "Nine Years in Russia," p. 55. [2] Ibid. [3] P. 56.

labour, he only in so far alters his mode of life as to procure for himself increased material enjoyment. In his garden he grows potatoes, onions, radishes, and cabbages, and one flower alone, the sun-flower, whose seeds are considered a delicacy by the children and young people of the village.

"The wooden huts, or *Izbas*," says Mr. Harrison,[1] "are built of pine logs, transversely laid and morticed together; the roof of planks is sometimes covered with loose straw, held together by pronged branches of trees; the door almost invariably has a porch, with a bench inside for rustic delectation on summer evenings; the interior of the dwelling is usually divided into two apartments, with one small window in each, and an enormous brick or tile stove built into the partition which separates the two rooms."

Nothing can be more primitive than the internal arrangements of such an Izba. In the Eastern corner is the *obraz*, the picture of some Saint, painted in oil on a wooden panel, and before it hangs a lamp that burns night and day. A table and some benches fixed round the walls complete the list of the furniture. The chief feature, however, in the house, is the huge stove, reaching almost from floor to ceiling, the top of which is not only

[1] "Nine Years' Residence in Russia," p. 101.

a favourite sleeping-place in winter but an agreeable lounge at all times.

From the top of the stove to the opposite wall, only a few feet below the ceiling, is a wooden platform or shelf, the ordinary sleeping-place of young and old; sheepskins, wearing apparel, felt coverings and little pillows form the bedding. This shelf, or "Palata," is a favourite playground for the children.

The stove has generally no chimney, but an opening in the wall called "the smoke window," provides for the escape of the smoke, which, however, seems to prefer to hang about the apartments. A pine-stick, thrust like a torch into a crevice in the wall gives a spare light during the long winter evenings, and this and the stove raise the temperature of the dwelling to 60 or 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

If the Russian peasant's dwelling is utterly devoid of beauty or comfort, the family life of its inhabitants is equally without charm; a family life in the higher significance of the words it cannot in fact be termed. The position of the women is a pretty fair indication of the culture of a country, and it must be confessed that in no civilized country is the lot of women so wretched as amongst the Great Russian peasantry. Throughout the many provinces where the soil is of a poor description, the major part of the male population are engaged in trade, and are

absent from home during a considerable portion of the year. In the meantime the burden of the household and the field-work devolves wholly on the women, who are looked upon by their male relatives pretty much as beasts of burden, in whom strong thews and sinews and robust health are recommendations far outweighing any beauty of feature or character.

In the governments of Moscow, Vladimir, and Kostroma, extensive and very varied manufactures are largely carried on, and the inhabitants of whole villages and districts are exclusively engaged in some special industry. In Ivanovo and the neighbourhood are cotton and linen factories, and several print-works, which employ a large number of workpeople. The cotton goods of Ivanovo are not only worn by the whole female population of Russia, but are exported through Irbit and Kiakhta into China, and also find their way into western countries where their origin is probably little suspected. In another district, of which the village of Pavlovo is the centre, the inhabitants are exclusively workers in metal; the knives, scissors, locks, and other hardware fabricated here are carried as far as Bokhara, Khiva, and Afghanistan. In the villages of the government of Vladimir, the inhabitants from early childhood to old age are occupied solely in painting the Ikons, or sacred pictures, on wooden panels, which they turn out in enormous quantities.

In the manufacturing towns and villages the higher classes differ little, if at all, in education or culture from the lowest. The rich capitalist may own a palace fitted up with every comfort and luxury, but all its grandeur is merely for show, and for the reception and edification of his guests. The richest merchants and manufacturers, and the poorest artisans are alike addicted to drunkenness in a frightful degree: champagne and the most expensive Rhine wines producing in the one case the result which in the other is brought about by vodka and cheap brandy. Among the rural and the manufacturing population alike the want of education results in the grossest superstitions. The belief in lucky and unlucky days is universal. The time for sowing and reaping, for cutting hay, and other agricultural operations is decided, not by the state of the weather or of the crops, but with reference to certain days in the calendar. Practices, which in their origin may have been holy and instructive, have degenerated into meaningless and lifeless forms. Nothing could, of course, be more edifying than the inauguration of harvesting operations by a religious service, but the spiritual meaning has come to be wholly overlooked, and the service has sunk into a superstitious form.

The dedication festival of the church is kept with great festivities for three days, in which no work is done; a fair is held, and drunkenness is prevalent.

Easter too is observed with much eating and drinking, as well as with great religious solemnity in the churches. On Monday in Easter week the village priest goes round his parish with his attendants and the holy pictures, and offers a thanksgiving prayer in every Izba, receiving in return a cake and 50 pence, often very unwillingly tendered. Idiots are very common in country districts; popular belief endows them with supernatural powers, especially with the gift of second sight, and much weight is attached to their irrational utterances.

HELSINGFORS.

CHAPTER IX.

MOSCOW.

The Appearance of the City—Early History—Conflagrations—The Kremlin—The Tower of Ivan Veliki—Bells—The Square of the Cathedrals—The Cathedrals—The Church of the Ascension—The Palace—The Kitai-Gorod—The Cathedral Vassili Blagennoï — Chasovena — Religious Sentiment — Pilgrimages—Fasts—Easter—The University—Gostinnoi Dvor—Beloi-Gorod—The Gipsy Quarter—Mercantile Class in Towns—Traktirs—Monasteries of New Jerusalem and Troitza Sergievsk.

"WHOEVER would know Russia let him go to Moscow," says the historian Karamsin; and doubtless, as St. Petersburg is the outcome of modern ideas and of reformed institutions, so is Moscow the symbol of the genius of the past. Here the rich tradesman preserves almost intact the simple manners and customs of his forefathers; here the nobility in spite of their external foreign polish are still in many respects the Boyards of old. Hence the true faith flowed over the length and breadth of the land, and to the cradle of his religion every true Russian turns with love and reverence.

Moscow, with her cathedrals, cloisters and relics, is like Kief, an object of pious pilgrimage to thousands.

"The Holy City;" such was the title she gained in the time of the Renaissance from the 15th to the 17th centuries, when she had forty times forty churches, with golden and silver and blue cupolas; such is the title she bears now, and the pilgrim as he sees her from the Hill of Prostrations kneels to acknowledge it.

But even here the pulsation of a new life makes itself felt. Moscow is now the central point of the Russian railway system; hither stream the inhabitants and the products of the most distant parts of the empire; and commerce, industry and art are day by day making progress even in "Matuschka Moskva," Dear Mother Moscow. Modern buildings are springing up; two shady Boulevards over four miles in length have been laid out; gas has been introduced, and tramway-cars run through the principal streets, so that Moscow is rapidly acquiring an European varnish.

Nowhere else are the contradictions and paradoxes, which astonish the stranger in Russia, more strikingly manifest. Palaces and hovels stand side by side; the primitive *telega* impedes the progress of the smartest of carriages; and next door to a brilliantly-lighted shop that would not disgrace the Paris Boulevards stands a stall on which bread, kvas, and onions are exposed for sale. In spite of recent innovations, however, Moscow, with its crooked streets and countless

churches, chapels, cloisters, towers, and belfries, and forever-clanging bells, is pre-eminently a Russian city. These churches and monastic buildings are the most characteristic feature of the city, numbering over 400, and built in every variety of style; or, to speak more accurately, in no style at all; each one being a new and often very strange embodiment of its builder's fancy. And the same remark applies to the private houses, and their decorations and details.

The area of the city is enormous in proportion to the number of the population. "The circumvallation is upwards of twenty English miles in extent, of a most irregular form, more resembling a trapezium than any other figure; within this are two nearly concentric lines of Boulevards; the one at the distance of about a mile and a half from the Kremlin, completed on both sides of the Moskva; the internal one, with a radius of about a mile, spreading only on the north of the river."[1] All the streets which cross these Boulevards lead to the centre of Moscow, the Kremlin. Artificial ponds, shady alleys, and gardens, the resort of many nightingales, abound within its precincts; and almost every house, small as well as great, has its own spacious green court, its garden, and its outbuildings.

[1] "Murray's Handbook to Russia," p. 225.

The streets, owing to the nature of the soft, black soil, are badly paved, here rising almost to a hillock, there sinking into a deep hole full of mud. The climate during the winter is described by western Europeans who have resided there as delightful, though cold; the air fresh and fine, the appliances to keep away the effect of cold abundant and excellent; and even the poorest are less inconvenienced than the poor in England. The winter mean temperature of the months December, January, and February is 14·7° Fahrenheit. But if the five months of winter are pleasant, the spring and summer are most disagreeable. The streets, that had been clean and dry, now become in the thaw ponds of mud, which when dried by the hot sun, turns into dust; and as the water supply is badly managed, and little attempt is made to water the roads, the atmosphere becomes filled with fine dust, and is as full of stenches as of dust.[1] The mean temperature of the summer months, June, July, and August, is 64·9° Fahrenheit.

The river Moskva enters the city at about the central point of the western side, and winds round the Devitchi Convent in the south-western corner, and thence flowing northward, passes beneath the Kremlin, and bends again to the south, thus describing in

[1] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 83.

its passage the figure of the letter S. Only a small portion of the city lies south of the river, which is crossed by several bridges, some of wood and others of stone.

When surveyed from the "Sparrow Hills," the spot whence Napoleon first beheld it, the view of the town, with its white walled and green or red-roofed houses, is most impressive; it lies nestling in a very sea of verdure, over which towers the famous Kremlin or fortress; and the gilt roofs and the crosses of its churches glittering in the sunshine justify the title, "Bailaya Moskva," White Moscow.

Within this vast area dwells a population of only half a million of inhabitants, of whom nine-tenths are of the Russo-Greek Church; and as the traveller looks on the numerous churches and shrines, and the Ikons with lights before them, and watches the bowings, and crossings, and constant baring of the head, and the strict observance of the fasts, he is impressed with the fact that externally the inhabitants are remarkable for their religiousness and demonstrative piety.

Moscow is said to have been founded in 1147. Its early history, like that of most Russian cities and towns, is a catalogue of endless wars, internecine conflicts, sieges, and conflagrations. The Mongols conquered the town and reduced it to ashes; and the old chroniclers do not state by whom it was rebuilt.

Its political importance dates from 1328, when Ivan the First made it his capital. This Ivan, surnamed "Kalita" from the alms-bag filled with money which he always carried for the benefit of the poor, surrounded the Kremlin with a wall of oak and a rampart of earth and stone.

The period of the city's greatest splendour dawned under Ivan the Great, who first assumed the title of "Ivan, by the grace of God, Ruler (Gosudar) of all Russia." The Royal Arms, as assumed by him, bore on one side the Byzantine two-headed eagle, and, on the other, the arms of the city of Moscow, a knight on horseback slaying a dragon. Between the years 1485 and 1492 the Kremlin was newly fortified with a wall of stone. At this time, say the old chroniclers, Moscow could vie in population, extent, and beauty with Novgorod.

The Mongol Khans bore the title of Tsar, and during their domination no Russian Prince ventured to assume it. But having freed themselves from the hated yoke, Ivan the Terrible and his successors were proud to call themselves Tsars. "The name of Tsar is that which the Holy Scriptures in the Slavonic language give to the kings of Judæa, Assyria, and Babylon, and which was given also to the Emperors of Rome and Constantinople. . . . We may imagine what prestige was added to the dignity of the Russian sovereign by this title, borrowed from Biblical an-

tiquity, from Roman majesty, and from the orthodox sovereigns of Byzantium. It recalled, at the same time, the recently-acquired freedom of Russia; for the Slavonic authors likewise bestowed this august title on the Mongol Khans, suzerains of the Muscovite princes. Now that fortune smiled upon Russia, it well became her prince to call himself 'Tsar.'"[1]

As Moscow is situated in a district entirely destitute of stone, where forests once abounded, wood was in the early days of its existence the chief building material; and hence the city was easily set on fire. In 1380, in the time of Demetrius of the Don, it was fired by Tamerlane's general; and not only the archives but 24,000 inhabitants were destroyed. In 1547, in the reign of Ivan the Terrible, another fire destroyed a great part of the city, and 1,700 people perished. In 1572 the Tartars fired the suburbs; and the city was visited by a conflagration which surpassed in horror all those that preceded it. The explosion of one magazine of powder carried away the river wall of the Kremlin; the débris choked up the river's bed, and the neighbouring lands were inundated. All the wooden buildings disappeared; those built of stone were reduced to ruins; and no fewer than 100,000 persons were destroyed in the flames or by the sword. Of all the

[1] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 266.

treasures, the famous picture of the blessed Virgin of Vladimir, the ancient capital, said to have been painted by St. Luke, and an object of profound veneration, alone remained uninjured.

The city was burnt again in the Polish invasion of 1611; and in 1812, when Napoleon advanced on the city, the Muscovites themselves set fire to the buildings, preferring the destruction of their Holy Mother Moscow, to her occupation by the foreign invader.

What the Areopagus was to Athens and the Capitol to Rome, the Kremlin is to the old city of the Tsars. It stands on elevated ground, the highest of the seven hills on which Moscow is built, overhanging the river Moskva. This grand old mediæval fortress is constructed in the form of an irregular polygon, of which the longest side runs parallel to the river, and is enclosed by a dentellated wall nearly a mile and a half in length. The wall, built of red brick, and of irregular height, in some places over 60 ft., in others not more than 4 ft, according to the nature of the ground, is pierced by five gateways and surmounted by numerous towers, of which four built of stone, storied, and of Italian-Gothic, are above the gates. The gate of the Saviour, or Sacred Gate, was built in 1491 by Pietro Solaris, of Milan; over it is the sacred picture of the Redeemer of Smolensk, before which criminals were allowed to make their last prayer; through

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(*To face p.* 168.)

it the new Emperor always passed on his way to coronation in the Cathedral of the Assumption; and the practice of passing through it bare-headed is rigidly enforced. Outside the gate Voskresenski stands the Chapel of the Virgin, called the Iberian Mother of God, containing the famous picture, or Ikon, brought from Mount Athos in the reign of the Tsar Alexis; venerated beyond any other in Moscow, and credited with many wonderful works. Another Italian built the Nikolski Gate, in the Italian Gothic style. Upon the crown of the arch is a picture of St. Nicholas of Mojaisk, to which all who pass through uncover, in thankful recognition of the Saint's supposed protection of the gateway, which Napoleon on leaving Moscow in vain endeavoured to destroy.

Within the walls of the Kremlin are Cathedrals, Churches, Palaces, Monasteries, the Treasury, the Senate House, the Arsenal, the office of the Holy Synod, the City granary, and the ancient College; and rising far above all the famous tower of Ivan Veliki, built in 1600 by the usurper Boris Godounof, after the murder of the young Tsar Demetrius, which is generally laid to his charge. The tower, standing apart from the cathedrals, is surmounted with a golden cupola, and bears Slavonic inscriptions in letters of gold which may be distinguished from afar:[1]

[1] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 333.

and on the first view of it every pious Russian uncovers his head and crosses himself devoutly. It is in height, according to the most trustworthy accounts, 325 feet, and contains no fewer than 33 bells hung in successive stages. At its foot, on a granite pedestal, lies "the Great Bell of Moscow," called "Tsar Kolokol," or "King of Bells," in height 20 feet 7 inches, in diameter 22 feet 8 inches, and weighing nearly 170 tons. It was founded in 1733, and a tradition, not quite reliable, says that it hung in a belfry of wood which was consumed by fire in 1737, and that in falling to the ground the large piece now resting near the pedestal was broken out of its side. Within the tower hangs another enormous bell, nearly as large as the King of Bells,[1] brought in triumph from Novgorod by the Tsar Ivan IV., "the largest bell which strikes." This is used only on great festivals, such as Easter, Christmas, and the coronation of an emperor; and according to Mr. Bayard Taylor's description, which has an appearance of exaggeration, sounds as loud as the report of several pieces of cannon.

The tower of Ivan forms one of the corners of "the square of the cathedrals," into which seven cathedrals are crowded. Of these the Cathedral of the Assump-

[1] "Behind the Scenes in Russia," p. 70.

tion is the most celebrated and the oldest. It was built by the Italian architect Aristotle Fioraventi, about the year 1475, in a style partly Renaissance and partly Tartar, on the site of an old church erected by the Metropolitan Peter in 1326. Through the dim light, which enters by small piercings in the wall that supply the place of windows, the pillars are seen to be covered with a gold ground, on which are paintings of Saints, sparkling with diamonds and other jewels. Here are the picture of the Saviour in the gold chasuble said to be painted by the Greek Emperor Emmanuel, and the famous picture of the Blessed Virgin, called the Holy Mother of Vladimir, painted according to tradition by St. Luke and brought to Moscow in 1395. On the platform in the nave, from the time of Ivan the Terrible, down to the present day, the Tsars have been crowned.

In the Cathedral of the Annunciation, with its nine towers and gilded roof, which stands on the highest point of Kremlin, the Tsars were baptized and married. And in the old church, on the site of which the Cathedral of St. Michael is built, as well as in the present building erected in 1505, forty-five princes of the Rurik and Romanof families, including Ivan the Terrible and his two sons, were buried. But since the time of Peter the Great the church has ceased to be the Imperial Mausoleum. The most

beautiful church in Moscow is the Red Church of the Ascension, which so excited the admiration of Napoleon that he gave the most stringent orders for its safe preservation.

Three of the palaces, like these three Cathedrals, are connected with the past history of Russia. The *Terem*, anciently the apartments of the Tsaritza and her children is of four stories; each much smaller than the one below it, so that each set of rooms has a terrace in front of it that forms part of the roof of the room below, the top story containing only one room. It was from the uppermost terrace that Napoleon saw Moscow burning below him. Communicating with the Terem is the Granovitaya Palata, built by Ivan III. in the 15th century, a single vaulted hall supported by one massive central pillar. Here Ivan feasted with his Boyards, and indulged in his cruel jests upon his guests; and here, after his coronation, the Tsar, wearing for the first time all his imperial insignia, dines with his nobles. Not far distant is the red or beautiful staircase, used only when the Emperor goes in state to the Cathedral of the Assumption, from the top of which the Tsars were wont to exhibit themselves to the populace, and to allow them to see "the light of their eyes." This staircase communicates with the New Palace, built by Nicholas I., which entirely shuts out from view the old buildings of the Ruriks, and is more remarkable for the

gorgeousness of the apartments within than for the beauty of the external architecture.

Adjoining the Kremlin on the eastern side, but separated from it by a large space called the Red or Beautiful Place, and also surrounded by a wall is the *Kitai-Gorod;* a name not meaning, as so many travellers translate it, *the China City*, but derived probably from Kitai-Gorod in Podolia, the birthplace of Helena, mother of Ivan IV. foundress of the Kitai-Gorod in Moscow.[1] Here is the old mansion of the Romanof family, which, though uninhabited, is kept up by the Tsars in its original condition. The small rooms and primitive arrangements were suited to the requirements of the Boyards, or merchants, to which the Romanof family belonged, until they came to the throne in 1613.

In this quarter, too, is the singular and unique Cathedral Vassili Blagennoï, erected by Ivan the Terrible in commemoration of the conquest of Kazan. "Ivan, then in the height of his glory, marched to Kazan carrying an immense church-tent with the army. The siege was carried on with vigour, and at the very moment that the deacon was pronouncing the words of the Gospel, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd," a tremendous explosion gave notice of the success of a mine and of the fall of the city

[1] "Rambaud's History of Russia," vol. i., p. 329.

On his return to Moscow in 1554, Ivan commenced the Cathedral, or rather mass of buildings containing nine churches, and dedicated it to St. Mary; a dedication which has now given place to that of St. Basil of Moscow, the Wonder-worker, whose remains repose in the church. Phedor Ivanovitch added eight churches to his father's nine, and painted the exterior; four other churches have been added since his time, making twenty-one in all. Of these eleven are on the ground floor, ten on the upper, the lower part of each dome being a church; they are of course exceedingly small. The so-called Cathedral is in the central spire.

"The general plan of the so-called Cathedral is a slightly oblong square, with lofty central octagonal spire; eight domes stand round it, and an additional one at the north-east. The domes are painted in the brightest colours, and all different from each other. The effect of a summer sun shining on the spires, domes, globes, corners, and chains is almost magical. It is usual at Moscow to bequeath money for the painting of the outside of the Cathedral."[1]

Dr. Neale states that "the long domination of the Mongols impressed a Tartaric similitude on Russian ecclesiology; and that the tent was the

[1] Dr. Neale. "A History of the Holy Eastern Church," vol. i., p. 283.

normal principle of all their architecture, well-nigh down to the time of Peter the Great." After that period the churches built in the villages were mean, and of no particular style. They are generally square, but sometimes in the form of a parallelogram, with cupolas varying in number from one to five, and in form from the elongated or flat, to the ogee or truncated; and with a clock or bell-tower, usually separated from the church. A late tradition makes the central of the five cupolas symbolize our Blessed Lord, and the four at the corners the four Evangelists. Towards the close of the eighteenth century a classical reaction set in; but a spirit of revival has now manifested itself; and the Holy Governing Synod has issued plans for the erection of new churches, and the Emperor has published an Ukase, commanding the adoption of the Byzantine style throughout his dominions.

The interior arrangements follow the plan uniform throughout the Eastern church. There are no seats, no pulpit, no organ, nor musical instruments. The Sanctuary is separated from the Nave by the *Iconastasis*, a solid partition, sometimes running to the roof, and almost always reaching up two-thirds of the way. In this are three doorways, each with a low door and a veil. Within the Sanctuary is the Altar, with the Chapel of Prothesis on the North and the Sacristy on the South. The *Iconastasis* is usually

painted and gilded, and adorned with pictures of the Saints and of other sacred subjects. In front of the central door is the Ambo, a round stone of one or more steps, from which the Gospel is read; and the Font is placed just inside the porch.

"In Russia there are numbers of small buildings or chapels, called Chasovena, furnished with holy pictures, which, from the name (the word *chas* signifying an hour), we may imagine to have been erected for the convenience of people assembling for the service of the hours. These buildings are often to be seen on the high roads, and especially on such as are frequented by pilgrims; and any part of divine service can be performed in them except the Holy Eucharist."[1]

The strong religious element that pervades the life of the Russian people is nowhere more noticeable than in Moscow. A stranger is struck not so much by the multiplicity and the costliness of the churches and shrines, and the numbers of the monks and popes parading the streets, as by the crowds which follow the religious processions, and by the reverent bearing of the throngs which fill the churches on Holy-days and on their eves. This religious sentiment expresses itself further in the care with which the lamp is lit before the domestic

[1] "The Holy Eastern Church," p. 56.

Ikon, or sacred picture, and by the custom according to which the Russian, on leaving home for his day's work, always bows and murmurs a prayer before the Ikon; an observance which is repeated whenever he passes a church or the picture of a Saint or a funeral procession.

Pilgrimages are much practised in Russia; not in crowds, as in Roman Catholic countries, but by individuals. In fulfilment of some vow, or in obedience to some inward impulse of his own will, and not under any order of the Church, the pious Russian takes his staff and starts for the Troitsa Monastery, for Kief, or for Solevetsk on the White Sea.

The fasts of the Greek Church are more in number and more severe than those observed in other countries of Europe. No less than 226 days in the year are observed as fasts with the most scrupulous fidelity. Of these the Great Fast before Easter is most rigorous; and no relaxation is permitted, except the use of oil and the taking of more than one meal on Saturday and Sunday; and the use of fish on the Annunciation and Palm Sunday. The lesser fasts, though not so rigorous, are very severe, and are strong witnesses to the devotional spirit of the people.

One of the weeks in Lent is invariably devoted to special devotions, to confession, and to preparation for Holy Communion. During Holy Week the services in the Cathedral are peculiarly impressive.

On Holy Thursday the ceremony of the washing of feet is observed in the Cathedral of the Assumption by the Metropolitan. In the mean-time the whole town shows signs of the near approach of the Great Easter Feast. At all the street corners tables are set out laden with boxes of red Easter eggs, piles of great round Easter cakes (Keeletche), pyramids of curds, and Easter lambs. At the first stroke of midnight a cannon is fired in the Kremlin; the great bell of the Assumption booms: and from the various churches and belfries, over two thousand bells clang, calling the faithful to the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, that is, of the Holy Eucharist; whilst, as if by the stroke of a magician's wand, on churches, domes, towers, and terminal crosses, thousands on thousands of lamps suddenly blaze forth. This midnight celebration is attended by young and old; all in holiday attire. At the conclusion of the service the priest advances to the central door of the Iconastasis, which is closed, and, making a cross with the censor of burning incense, announces to the crowd "Christos Voskres," "Christ is risen," and the choir burst forth with the Resurrection hymn.

When the family return home in early morning, the Easter-cake, which has been carried to the church and has there been blest, is cut up; this delicacy is seldom wanting, even on the table

of the very poorest. The fast is over, and in palace and cottage alike the Easter breakfast is a welcome and a sumptuous feast.

The University of Moscow is the oldest in Russia proper, and was founded in 1755 by the Empress Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, at the instigation and through the exertions of her young favourite Count Ivan Shouvalof. It has four faculties, History, Physics, Jurisprudence, and Medicine, for students in general; and one of Theology for students of the Russo-Greek Faith; and is under the authority of the State, which contributes £52,000 annually towards the total expenditure of £65,000. There are 69 lecturers or professors, and about 1,600 students. In addition to the educational establishments, there is a large Foundling Hospital, and the Nicholas Institute, established for female orphans of needy servants of the State, in which 800 girls are educated for teachers and governesses for the schools in the interior of the Empire.

Within the Katai-Gorod is the Gostinnoi Dvor, a Bazaar often called Räde, the Rows; an enormous building with a labyrinth of passages and shops, in which since the end of the 16th century the trade of Moscow has centered.

Encircling the Kremlin and the Katai-Gorod is the Beloi-Gorod or White City, so-called because it was, of old, occupied by the people freed from

taxation, in contra-distinction to the *cherny-narod* or the black or taxable people.

A certain part of the city is inhabited by gipsies, who have adopted the Russian dress and conform to the State religion. They do not, however, amalgamate with the rest of the population. The men are almost exclusively horse-dealers and horse or cow-doctors, and both men and women ply many a trade that will not bear the light of day. In this gipsy colony a band of singers has for many years existed; and it is one of the peculiarities of Moscow life that no popular entertainment is considered perfect without this gipsy choir. It is to be seen at the clubs, and at balls and parties; the singing is not harmonious, but bears the impress of wild feeling and passionate emotion.

In Moscow is to be seen to its best advantage the Russian restaurant or *Traktir*, which is not to be found at St. Petersburg, and which must not be confounded with the vodka shop, where the peasant drinks a liquor, made from fermented rye, glass after glass till his money is finished. The traktir is a house for eating and drinking, but also for business; here the respectable inhabitants meet for meals, and the peasant and merchant make their bargains. The Troitski traktir serves as the exchange where the trading merchants and brokers complete the engagements which they have begun in the open street. In

this and all the principal traktirs a large mechanical organ is continually playing, whilst the waiters, dressed ordinarily in white tunics and trousers, and on fête days in coloured dresses of a kind of satin, supply the wants of their customers. Though wines and spirits are supplied, tea is the chief article of consumption, and is drunk in quantities that seem fabulous to a stranger. The middle and upper classes take tea twice or three times a day, and oftentimes consume at a sitting from twelve to twenty cups. The tea is served in a small teapot, which is refilled with a never-failing supply of hot water from the *Samovar*, a large urn made of bronze or brass, with a tube running through the centre filled with burning charcoal; and the beverage grows weaker and weaker. "The mode of drinking is peculiar; the tea, without cream or sugar, is sipped from the saucer, which is held nicely balanced on three fingers of the left hand; the right hand holds a lump of sugar, from which the possessor nibbles a portion, and keeping it between his teeth, sucks the warm liquid through it."[1] Each traktir is frequented by its own peculiar class of customers; one by the old Religionists, another by the peasants, a third by the Tartars, and others by the gipsies; but in each and all there are two Ikons, one of a saint, generally the Blessed Virgin, the other of the Emperor.

[1] Harrison, "Nine Years' Residence in Russia," p. 82.

Other popular drinks are hydromel, or mead, made of honey flavoured with spices and fermented with hops, and kvass, a slightly acid and effervescing liquor, brewed from rye, apples, pears, and raspberries, which, though fermented, contains very little alcohol.

In Russian towns the mercantile class forms a caste of its own, with which the nobility and the Tchinovniks never, or very rarely, intermingle. Indeed, the Russian merchant is generally very little superior, in point of education and culture, to the peasant class to which he in fact belongs. His great pride consists in the possession of well-bred horses. The women of this class, in spite of their diamonds and of dresses made in the latest fashion, are just what they were 150 years ago, utterly uncultivated, and incapable of any intellectual enjoyment. Their days are spent in playing at patience, in eating sugar-plums and drinking tea, or simply in doing nothing. Being very religious, as well as frightfully superstitious, they find a certain amount of occupation in visiting churches and convents, and are, according to their lights, charitable to the poor. The unmarried girls have very few of the pleasures belonging to their age; in their parents' eyes they are mere marketable commodities whose value is commensurate with the dower that they can bring to a husband; and who are to be got rid of as soon as a bridegroom with a

purse to match can be procured, the bride's inclinations being seldom, if ever, considered.

Amongst the lower Bureaucracy we find a type of woman not to be met with at present in other European countries. Many girls of this class are sent to institutions, and, so-called, female gymnasiums, where they receive a training which unfits them for the position in which they are born. The reading of books, advocating the rights of women in society and in the State, and association with young men holding extreme socialist principles, make these girls ardent advocates of the emancipation of women. A few years ago it was the fashion among them to have their hair cropped short, to wear spectacles, to smoke cigars, and to course about in short jackets, riding whip in hand.

In the neighbourhood of Moscow are two famous monastic establishments, the monastery of New Jerusalem and that of Troitsa Sergievsk, the latter of which is specially noteworthy, on account of its fabulous wealth, and of the great part it has played in Russian history.

The monastery of New Jerusalem was founded in 1655 by the Patriarch Nikon, who erected within its precincts an exact model of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

A cloister of the first rank is called a Laura. The Laura of Troitsa, that is, of the Holy Trinity, is

situated about forty miles from Moscow, on the road to Yaroslaf. It was founded in 1338 by St. Sergius, a hermit, the fame of whose sanctity attracted other anchorites to share his solitude, and who thus became the founder of a religious community. He it was who encouraged Prince Demetrius to attack the hordes of the Mongol Prince Mamai, and thus earned for himself the undying gratitude of the Russian nation. Sergius died in 1393; in the same year the Tartars destroyed the monastery and ravaged Moscow. After the retreat of the enemy, Nikon, the successor of Sergius, found the body of his predecessor uninjured beneath the ruins. The rumour of the wonder spread far and wide, and the faithful streamed from all parts to pray at the holy man's tomb. Abundant gifts and largesses, more especially the benefactions of the Tsars, and the Grand Dukes, laid the foundation of the wealth of the community, which by degrees became prodigious. During the disturbances that followed the appearance of the false Demetrius, the patriots found shelter behind the walls of the monastery; and one of the most heroic deeds recorded in Russian history is the defence of their house in 1608 by the warlike monks against the Polish army, 30,000 strong, under Sapieha. For sixteen months the valiant monks held out, until Sapieha in disgust raised the siege, and gave up the attempt to drive the "grey crows," as he termed them from their nest.

Within the walls of this vast monastic establishment there are as many as ten churches, an imperial palace, the residence of the Archimandrite, and numerous other buildings. Amongst the most precious treasures here preserved is the wonder-working picture of St. Sergius, covered with priceless jewels. It was carried into battle by the Tsar Alexis in his Polish wars, and by Peter the Great in his wars with Charles XII. The wealth of this monastery in precious stones, plate, &c., is enormous.

THE CATHEDRAL, MOSCOW.

CHAPTER X.

SLAVOPHILS—NIHILISTS.

Russian Liberalism — Moscow Students and German Philosophy — Slavophilism and Nihilism — Tendency of the Student Mind—Arrests of the Nihilists.

IN spite of railways and of the steady advance of cosmopolitan civilization, the old capital of the Muscovite Tsars presents a marked contrast, in outward appearance, to its more modern rival St. Petersburg, with its huge palaces and vast regularly-built streets, squares, and quays; and its inhabitants, like their native town, have preserved a good deal of the old Russian character, which looked upon everything that savoured of the West with dislike and suspicion.

Ever since the beginning of the 18th century, when Moscow was abandoned by her Tsars, the "White Stone City" has been the resort of those who were dissatisfied with, or found no place in, the existing order of things, and who looked back upon the period before Peter the Great as the golden age of Russian history.

That Peter's ruthless method of civilizing his country should have roused feelings of indignation and opposition in the hearts and minds of his sub-

jects was only natural. "Never, perhaps," says Dr. Eckhardt, "have the national peculiarities of a great nation been more violently dealt with than was the case in Moscow in the beginning of the 18th century. The dignity of the Patriarch was forcibly abolished, the enormous property of the Church was made subservient to secular objects, the West-European calendar and reckoning of time was introduced amid the beating of drums, the national costume was prohibited, the established style of military service and arming was fashioned after German models, the cloister-like seclusion of women was broken through, the royal palace was removed to a Finnish swamp, a great number of hated foreigners were placed at the head of affairs; a new school system was organized, even the orthography and grammar of the Russian language must submit to be remodelled by the imperious son of the Tsar Alexis."[1] After the destruction of the Streltsi and of the party who sided with them, and the suppression of the Cossack revolt, there remained in Russia no armed force capable of resisting the sovereign will of the Emperor.[2] The discontented nobles might maintain an attitude of passive discontent, and console themselves by idealizing everything that bore the genuine Russian stamp, but no such thing existed as an embodied

[1] Eckhardt's "Modern Russia," p. 20. [2] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 456.

opposition, except among the Raskol, the body of dissenters who had left the Church at the time of the reform of the Patriarch Nikon.

The innovations introduced by Peter, the German favouritism of the Empress Anna, and the Gallomania of Catherine II., all tended to foster the so-called "Slavophil" sentiment, but the Slavophil doctrine did not take definite form until much later.

During the early years of Alexander I., and more especially after the fall of Napoleon, the great enthusiasm for nationality which spread over Europe found a prompt echo in Russia. "The Slavophils," says Mr. Wallace, "were the Russian representatives of the nationalistic reaction, and displayed both its serious and frivolous elements."[1]

During the iron rule of Nicholas, the existence of anything like a real liberal party was rendered impossible by the energetic action of the secret police; but amongst the so-called Russian Liberals whose head-quarters were at Moscow, different groups with slightly different tendencies might be pointed out.[2] There were the "fault-finding aristocrats," consisting of people of various kinds all united by the common bond of hatred of St. Petersburg. Members of old Boyard families who had become obnoxious at court

[1] Wallace, vol. ii., p. 164.

[2] Eckhardt's "Modern Russia," p. 17, 18.

or failed in their career; ambitious ex-office-holders who had quarrelled with their superiors; and noble idlers acquainted with the world of London and Paris, formed the bulk of this society; and amongst them might be met with some few inheritors of the liberal traditions of the early years of Alexander I. But this Moscow opposition party had no thought of definite plans, no consciously pursued aims; dependence on the favour of the Tsar was a fact as patent in Moscow as in St. Petersburg.

Of much more importance was the group of students which about forty years ago had gathered round the University of Moscow,[1] and which sought refuge from the absolutism which encompassed their whole material existence in the study of German philosophy, more especially of the systems of Hegel and Schelling; a study which, says the author of "Russia Before and After the War," was carried by many of them to a perfect mania, weeks and months being spent in discussing the most insignificant pamphlets of the Hegelian school.

This group gradually divided into two separate parties, of which the one, to whom belonged Alexander Herzen, devoted itself to the study of the French socialist writers; whilst the other, of which the Aksakofs, the two Kiriéevskis, and Juri Samarin,

[1] Eckhardt, p. 18.

were members, applied themselves to mastering the ideas of Hegel and Schelling, and passed on from them to the views of the German Romanticists.[1] It is true, as has been pointed out by Mr. Wallace,[2] that the Hegelian view that the Weltgeist, or Absolute Reason, had found its highest and final expression in the Germanic peoples, did not commend itself to the Russian admirers of the German philosopher; but they adopted his theory, and setting aside his conclusions built on it their own; which were that Western Europe was on the high road to ruin, and that on Russia, still young, fresh, and innocent, now devolved the task of inscribing her spirit in the history of the human mind, and of gaining the victory of science, art, and faith on the ruins of tottering Europe.[3] "With all the zeal of youthful enthusiasm," says Dr. Eckhardt,[4] "these patriotic fanatics devoted themselves to the study of their national history previous to Peter the Great, while they advocated a return to pure nationality; endeavoured to enter into relations with the lower classes; indeed at times assumed the national attire, and appeared, to the astonishment of Moscow society, with the shirt over the trousers and the

[1] Eckhardt's "Modern Russia," p. 174.
[2] Wallace, vol. ii., p. 165.
[3] Prince Odoefski, quoted by Wallace, vol. ii., p. 167.
[4] "Modern Russia," p. 174.

sleeveless jacket, which had been worn for 150 years only by peasants and the poorest townsfolk."

Hegel's philosophy of history had made it clear that a new race, called to have dominion over the world, must be the bearer of a new idea, and of a new principle; and the discovery of the system of Russian Communism by Baron von Haxthausen in 1842, 43, and communicated by him to his friends Kiriéevski and Khomyskof, was hailed by the Slavophil group as the revelation of the new principle of the Pan-Sclavonic empire of the future. "Henceforth," says Dr. Eckhardt,[1] "the constitution of communism was the Alpha and Omega of Slavophil wisdom, and at the same time constituted the connecting link between them and the Socialistic school of Herzen." Hand in hand with the democratic tendency which led the Slavophil enthusiasts to look to the common people alone for the regeneration of their country, went attachment to the national church and to Byzantine theology, which had, so ran the phrase, saved the country from both Papal tyranny and Protestant infidelity.

"The Slavophil doctrine was," says Mr. Wallace, "regarded by the society of St. Petersburg as one of those harmless eccentricities that are always to be found in Moscow. That young men of good

[1] Eckhardt, p. 174, 75.

family should associate on familiar terms with the people, adopt their dress and take part in theological discussions, seemed odd and childish, and so the new school, though it was a good deal talked about, found but few adherents. But though their numbers were few their influence was great, and the Slavophils, at all events, deserve credit for having directed attention to the truth, once very insufficiently recognized, that the "historical development of Russia has been peculiar, that her present social and political organization is radically different from that of the countries of Western Europe, and that consequently the social and political evils from which she suffers are not to be cured by remedies which may have proved efficacious in France or Germany."[1]

According to Mr. Wallace the Slavophils must be considered "more Russian than Slav, more Muscovite than Russian." They are inclined to favour the idea of a grand Sclavonic confederation with Russia at its head. During the last few years the old Slavophils have become to a great extent merged in and confounded with the so-called "National Party." A recent writer[2] has described the great National Party as consisting in 1877, at the out-break of the war with Turkey, of very numerous adherents

[1] Wallace, vol. ii., p. 172.

[2] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 297.

from the army, from the lower officials, and from the clergy, with Prince Tsherkasski, Ivan Aksakof, the President of the[1] Moscow Society of Benevolence, formerly the Slav Committee, Katkof, the editor of the *Moscow Gazette*, and other journalists at its head.

The same writer attributes the keen interest of this party in the Servian war, and their clamour for Russian intervention after the Servian defeats, to the fact that the war was looked on by them as the key-stone of the National period of reform, represented by Alexander II., and as the frontispiece and title of a new and more momentous chapter of Russo-Sclavonic history.

The question of Russian Nihilism has of late excited great interest, but it is not easy to obtain trustworthy information on the subject. The name "Nihilist" was first bestowed on these advocates for the destruction of everything by the celebrated novelist Ivan Tourguénief in 1860. But the word is not a new one. It has been pointed out in a recent work on Nihilism by Signor Arnaudo, that the word was used by Royer-Collard and Victor Hugo as synonymous with Scepticism. Although Alexander Herzen has been considered the founder of Nihilism, he was, more correctly speaking, the introducer of Nihilist principles into Russia: and with him must be associated Tsherni-

[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 297.

kevski and Bakunin, the latter of whom succeeded Herzen in the editorship of the famous *Kolokol*, which changed, under the new management, from a Radical to a Revolutionary journal, and preached subversion of Church and State at any price, even at the expense of a general chaos.[1]

The following extracts from the manifesto put forth by Bakunin in 1868 give a clear idea of the new society to which he gave the name of the "Alliance Internationale de la Démocratie Socialiste," and of which he constituted himself the head. "Brethren, I come to announce unto you a new gospel, which must penetrate to the very ends of the world . . . . The old world must be destroyed and replaced by a new one. The *Lie* must be stamped out and give way to Truth. . . . . The first lie is *God*. The second lie is *Right* . . . . And when you have freed your minds from the fear of a *God*, and from that childish respect for the fiction of *Right*, then all the remaining chains that bind you, and which are called science, civilization, property, marriage, morality and justice will snap asunder like threads. . . . . Let your own happiness be your only law. . . . . Our first work must be destruction and annihilation of everything as it now exists ; you must accustom yourselves to destroy everything, the good with the bad ;

[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 115.

for if but an atom of this old world remains, the new will never be created."

A recent Nihilist author quoted by M. Arnaudo writes, "Down with instruction and science; we have had enough of it for a thousand years. The thirst for study is an aristocratic one, which, like the desire for conjugal felicity, engenders a love of wealth. We must extirpate this taste, and develop in its place drunkenness, backbiting, and a corruption till now unknown. All geniuses must be stifled in their cradles. So we shall arrive at perfect equality."

It is not easy to understand how such doctrines can commend themselves to any even ordinarily sane mind; especially when it is remembered that neither the Russian Nihilist teachers nor their followers belong to the lowest and most uneducated classes. For, according to the confession of the would-be assassin of the Emperor, Solovief, three-fourths of the revolutionists with whom he was connected were former students of the universities.

As to the causes which predispose so many of the Russian youth to adopt doctrines so utterly at variance with the common sense of humanity, Signor Arnaudo says: "The thing may be explained in three ways. First, the Russians understand science easily, and like the study of it, provided it is all prepared for them by others. This accounts for the fact that Russia has produced very little original

talent. Secondly, the rising generation shows a great tendency towards idleness, and a great liking for conversation and discussions. It has two defects; it is too easily excited and never thoroughly investigates a subject. The Russian youths are intelligent, and appropriate with extraordinary promptitude all that comes to them from abroad; but they take it as it comes and build their own theories upon it. Thirdly, as Professor Fleury has remarked, all the young men and women that frequent the universities show the same inaptitude for reasoning and abstract ideas; their minds seize and retain particulars and details, but with difficulty surmount the conception of generality and collectiveness." The whole solution of the problem is not, however, to be sought in any special idiosyncracies of the Russian character. It cannot be denied that the relations that exist in Russia between the State and the Universities have long been, and continue to be, unsatisfactory in the extreme.

"Of real order and conformity to law," says a recent writer,[1] "the authorities understand as little as the students. The effect of the incessantly recurring disorders on the one hand, and the equally incessant acts of tyranny on the other, has been that hundreds of miserably poor students, who have not

[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 223.

completed their studies, are annually thrown upon the world. . . . These unclassed students, who form a distinct body, the proletariate of intelligence, have for the most part nothing else to do but to urge their former fellow-pupils to commit foolish acts, to hatch petty conspiracies, to keep up a connection with the revolutionary emigrants in Switzerland, and to inoculate the rude proletariate, emancipated women and raw schoolboys, with their own vague and senseless ideas."[1]

In May, 1875, in accordance with a pre-arranged plan, a wholesale arrest of suspected Nihilist conspirators took place; the preliminary investigations occupied more than a year; and, finally, 183 persons were brought to trial, of whom ninety-nine were condemned. But, as more recent events have amply testified, these severe measures produced little effect on the activity of the revolutionary Committee. The trial and acquittal of Vera Sassulitch for the attempted murder of General Trephof, the Chief of the Police, and the assassination of several other persons in an eminent position from political motives,—General Mesezef, the Chief of the Gendarmerie, Prince Krapotkin, the Governor of Kharkof, and Baron Heyking at Kief, are proofs that the Nihilists are prepared to carry out their

[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 223.

destructive principles to the very utmost. Three unsuccessful attempts were made on the life of the Emperor Alexander II. during the years 1879 and 1880; and on the 13th of March, 1881, the world was startled by the tidings that he had fallen a victim to their murderous designs. The perpetrators of this crime, which was executed with fiendish cruelty, gloried in their success, and on their trial one of them boldly declared that Russia will perhaps one day be grateful for their course of violence. Of the 3,501 fires which, according to the *Official Messenger*, took place in June, 1879, 508 are attributed to incendiarism, proved or suspected, and 1,753 to causes unknown.[1]

It is admitted on all hands that the remedies hitherto applied have done little to mitigate the evil. "It is not," says M. Arnaudo, "by imprisoning and sending into exile hundreds and thousands of people, justly or unjustly accused of deeds which they may or may not have committed, that peace will be restored." The supreme remedy, say the Liberals, is to give the country a constitution; and in the meanwhile, until this great and difficult work can be accomplished, they ask of the Government the abolition of castes, the proclamation of civil equality, the liberty of the press and of public speaking,

[1] "Russia Before and After the War," p. 385.

reform in taxation, free access for all to all the schools, suppression of the Tchin, liberty of conscience, emancipation of the Jews and of all sects deprived of civil rights, and other like liberal changes; and by this means they hope, they say, not for a new order of things, but for a transformation for the better.

KASAN.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VOLGA.

Course of the Volga—Nijni-Novgorod—The Fair—Tartars—Tartar Houses—Marriages—Tchouvashes—Tcheremes—Votiaks—Mordvins—Tsaritzin—German Colonies—Steppes—Navigation of the Volga—Fisheries—Astrakhan—Kalmucks—Buddhism—Kirghiz.

THE Volga, the longest river in Europe, called by the Tartars *Idel*, or *Edel*—wealth overflow—and by the Russians *Mother Volga*, rises in the government of Tver, on the south-eastern slope of the Valdai Hills, 550 feet above the level of the sea; and, after running a course including windings of nearly 2,400 miles, empties itself at Astrakhan into the Caspian Sea. In point of scenery it cannot vie with many other European rivers; but certainly there are none which traverse regions boasting of such diversities of climate, of population, and, to a certain extent, of scenery. Flowing, near its source, through several small lakes, and through swampy lowlands clothed with pine forests, the Volga becomes navigable for small steamers first at Tver, an ancient town founded in 1182, and now rejoicing in a considerable trade and

in a population of nearly 30,000; thence it passes onwards through green pastures and waving corn-fields, which merge, in their turn, into the vast steppes of the South.

About 290 miles below Tver, fields and meadows give the left bank a more cheerful aspect, and the right bank rises gradually into hilly slopes, on which is built Yaroslaf, at the confluence of the Volga and the Kotorosth. This ancient city, founded about 1030, and for centuries the scene of many a strife and struggle, has been, since the sixteenth century, a depôt of foreign goods. It now has 37,000 inhabitants, and is an important centre of manufactures, promising to be the great depôt of that portion of the Ural iron which is destined for Moscow and St. Petersburg. Below the picturesquely situated old town of Kostroma the river increases in breadth; and as it approaches Nijni-Novgorod, the contrast between the plains on the left and the hills on the right bank becomes more striking. With the exception of Samara all the large cities on the Volga are built on picturesque hills on the right bank.

In latitude 56° 19′ 43″ north, and longitude 44° 0′ 58′ east, the Volga receives the Oka, flowing into it from the south-west; and near the angle formed by the confluence of the rivers is Nijni-Novgorod, a city with a population of 40,742, which

increases at the time of the great fair to more than 250,000; it possesses two cathedrals and has manufactories of linen and leather. The town consists of two parts; the Upper City, built in the form of an amphitheatre on the high ground around the Kremlin above the Volga; and the Lower City, in which are the new quays, and the streets and buildings along the right bank of the Oka. The latter communicates with the Upper City by a bridge of boats. The old city was founded in the thirteenth century by the Grand Duke George of Souzdal, as a defence against the incursions of the warlike Mordvians and Bulgarians; and was taken by the Tartars no less than five times. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the independence of the Muscovite Empire, and the existence of the Orthodox Church were threatened, the patriots of Nijni-Novgorod, under the command of the butcher Kouzma Minine and of Prince Demetrius Pojarski, delivered Moscow from the domination of the Poles.

On the large, sandy tongue of land between the Volga and the Oka, each of which is here a quarter of a mile wide, the great fair is annually held during the eight weeks that follow the first of July. The fair dates from the ninth century, but its site has been four times changed. Originally it took place at Bulgara, the capital of the ancient Bulgarians, which was situated at the confluence of the Kama with the Volga.

During the domination of the Kasan Tartars, it was removed to Kasan, and after the conquest of Kasan by Ivan IV. in 1552, was again removed to Makarief, fifty miles below Novgorod, where is situated the famous monastery of St. Macarius. In 1818, after a great fire, an order of the Emperor Alexander I. changed the site to Novgorod. Of late years the more general adoption, except in the peasant class, of Western fashions in dress, has robbed the fair of that oriental picturesqueness which so many travellers have graphically described.[1] Here, in the oblong block, consisting of long rows of permanent yellow stone houses, which are built, owned, and let, by the Government, and in other buildings, "which form enormous faubourgs, larger than cities, which have grown up around this *inner temple*,"[2] are crowded wares of all kinds, tea, sugar, cotton, timber, leather, furs, and linen from Siberia, silks and carpets from Tiflis and Persia; and on a little island of sand in the Oka is stored the iron from the Ural, "the most valuable of all the commodities brought to the fair."[3] Previously to the year 1856, all the tea imported into Russia was brought from China overland to Maimachen, near the Russian frontier,[4] and thence conveyed by way of Kiakhta to

[1] Bryce, "Transcaucasia and Ararat," p. 2.
[2] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 72. [3] Ibid., p. 73. [4] Ibid., p. 86.

the fair, and was never less than six months on the way. But in 1856 the duty on tea brought direct from Canton to Russian ports by sea was greatly reduced, and, as the voyage occupies only three months, the tea imported by way of Kiakhta has greatly diminished in quantity and price.

A noticeable feature of the fair is the absence from the stalls and shops of all English, French, and German manufactured articles, so successfully has the Russian protection tariff excluded all foreign competition.[1]

It is calculated that the 200,000 people who attend the fair circulate about 17,000,000, some say 30,000,000, pounds sterling, mostly in direct purchase and sale of commodities lying on the spot.[2] This great centre influences the commerce of Eastern Europe and of half of Asia; but it is a question if it will long retain this position, and whether it will not, through the multiplication of railroads and other causes, change its character, and from being the *sole centre* become one centre among many of Russian trade. Its position on the great river Volga assures to it a large portion of the Ural iron, and most of the Siberian trade; and, to use Mr. Butler Johnstone's words, "the future of Nijni-Novgorod will probably

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[1] Bryce, "Transcaucasia and Ararat," p. 3.
[2] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 121.

be this: as a fair it will diminish in importance, but as a depôt for those goods of which it is the natural centre, it will increase in importance, and, from a temporary depôt, will probably become more and more a permanent depôt."[1]

Like all fairs, Nijni-Novgorod has an abundance of amusements; eating and drinking, theatres and casinos, ballets and gipsy-dances, and among the lower class orgies of barbarous debauchery and degradation, of which those who know most of them say, "There is no viler hell upon earth than Nijni-Novgorod in the fair time for those who choose to make it so."[2]

As far as the eastern frontier of the government of Nijni-Novgorod the villages are all of the Great Russian type; but where the little river Sara falls into the Volga, we enter upon the territory of Finnish and Tartar races, of the Tchouvashes, Tcheremes, Mordvins, and Tartars, who form, next to the Russians, the bulk of the population, and most of whom have preserved their agricultural mode of life and their national customs.

The old Tartar town of Kasan, and the government of the same name may be considered the head-quarters of these diverse nationalities, of whom the Tartars are, both numerically and historically, by far

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[1] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 145. [2] "Russia in 1870," p. 379.

the most important. For two whole centuries they ruled over the greater portion of Russia, and exercised a powerful influence on its fortunes and on the character of its people.

The Tartars are the descendants of an ancient people of Turkish origin. That branch of the family which had acquired from its chief the name of Tartar was at one time dominant throughout a great portion of Asia, but was subsequently subjugated by the Mongols under their terrible leader Tchingiz Khan; and at this period, when in point of fact the Tartars ceased to be a distinct nation, their name first appears in European history. They took part with the Mongols in their various wars; and owing to a singular freak of fortune, whilst posterity has apportioned to the Mongols the honour and glory of the conquests thus achieved, the horrors and cruelties perpetrated have been laid at the door of the Tartars. From this time forth the obscure name of Tartar became known and feared alike in Western Asia and in Europe. The name of the conquered was transferred to the conqueror.

The Tartars formed the bulk of Tchingiz Khan's army during his later raids, and their language established itself in the conquered territories, among the Bachkirs, the Tchouvashes, in the Crimea, and on the Kuban.

The name of Mongol merged completely in that of

Tartar, and the amalgamation of the two nations became so complete that, when the Mongol empire fell to pieces, no traces of such an admixture remained. In 1237 Batu Khan, a grandson of Tchingiz Khan, subdued the greater part of Russia, and founded the kingdom of Kaptshak, which embraced northern and western Asia, Russia, and part of Poland. Batu was the first Khan of the "Golden Horde."

The empire of Kaptschak fell to pieces as suddenly as it had arisen. After an existence of less than a century, the record of which is but a tissue of bloody wars and of perpetual partitions, a new and more fortunate conqueror, Tamerlane, overthrew the dynasty of Batu. On the ruins of the Golden Horde arose four new Khanates, Kasan, Astrakhan, Kaptschak, and the Crimea. Kaptschak was before long merged in the other three; and the Tartars of Kaptschak found refuge among the Bachkirs and Kirghiz, where, it is said, they to this day preserve their name and the traditions of their origin.

Ivan IV. subjugated Kasan in 1552, and Astrakhan a few years later. The conquest of the Crimea forms one of the most brilliant episodes in the reign of Catherine II. The Tartar race is, undoubtedly, the best of those which sprung from the admixture of Mongol and Turkish blood. This superiority is doubtless greatly owing to the beneficial influence

exercised on them by the Bulgars of the Volga, with whom they are now completely amalgamated.

The Tartars in the Government of Kasan, who number about 450,000 (precise statistics are not procurable), have still preserved many of their national peculiarities, customs and traditions, and live quite apart from the Russians. The favourite occupation of the poorer classes is horse-dealing and the care of horses. The men shave their heads and have scanty beards. The features of the women are not unpleasing, but tasteless dress gives them an awkward, ponderous appearance, and their inactive life inclines them to premature corpulence. The younger women paint their faces, blacken their teeth, eyebrows, and eyelids, and dye their nails a yellowish brown.

A Tartar house, or Izba, of the bettermost class is as a rule divided into two parts, the front and the back; between which runs a passage, where the family devotions are conducted. The front of the Izba is again sub-divided into the male and female apartments. Along the walls are wide wooden benches, and behind these, hidden by a curtain, are rows of feather beds. On the edge of the stove stand two iron or brass water pots, one for the men and the other for the women. A cupboard, some iron-bound chests and Bokhara rugs compose the

furniture of the room. Even in the poorest houses a small space is curtained off behind the large stove, where the mistress of the house can retire from the presence of male visitors.

Like most other Orientals the Tartars are exceedingly hospitable. Tea drinking is the great feature of all their social gatherings; and fabulous accounts are given of the amount of tea which a Tartar is able to consume at a sitting, and which surpasses even the achievements of the Russian merchants.

The Tartars are Mahometans, and, unlike most of their creed, make little objection to the presence of strangers in their Mosques, or even at their services.[1] Marriages are conducted by female agents; and a man is forbidden by law to see his wife before marriage; strange to say, neither the bridegroom nor the bride takes part in the marriage ceremonies, which are celebrated by the Mollah in the presence of their relations and friends. When a Tartar falls dangerously ill, the Mollah, or in his absence some old man or woman, reads the 36th chapter of the Koran concerning the resurrection of the dead. The dead are not allowed to remain unburied for more than twelve hours, and during that period the relations of the deceased abstain from meat and drink.

[1] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 59.

Attached to each of the city mosques is a boarding-school for boys, under the direction of the Mollah, supported by the rich Tartar merchants, in which the system known in England as Bell and Lancaster's is adopted;[1] the wife of the Mollah also has classes for such girls as choose to attend them. Cut off, as all true believers are, by the Koran, from Christian society and culture, the Tartar population has been little influenced by the Russian element around it, and still retains the remembrance of the former greatness of the hordes, and, it is said, a hope of the restoration of the kingdom of Kasan.

The Tchouvashes are another race who inhabit the governments of Kasan, Orenburg, Simbersk, and Saratof: they are numbered at about 570,000 souls, of whom 300,000 are in the neighbourhood of Kasan. Their origin has long been a vexed question; and their language is composed of a mixture of Finnish, Turkish, and Slav words. The tract of country in which they reside was originally inhabited by Bulgars, Khazars, and Bourtass; in whom some Oriental scholars recognize the ancestors of the present Tchouvashes. In their cast of features the Tchouvashes are decidedly less Mongolian than the Tartars; but the absence of beauty among them

[1] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 57.

is very remarkable, especially among the "fairer" sex, who, both in build and dress, are scarcely to be distinguished from the men. They live in small villages, situated in the more remote and solitary parts of the country. The majority are Christians, at least in name, the remainder, though nominally Mahometans, cling to their ancient heathen practices. The wild and savage character of this people is gradually yielding to civilizing influences; and it would not in these days be easy to find a Tchouvashe acting as his ancestors would have acted, and, to revenge himself on his enemy, hanging himself at his door, and thus rendering him liable to a charge of murder! The excessive dread of all official and legal action, and even of any written document which prompted this curious form of vengeance, is still one of the characteristic traits in the character of the Tchouvashes. A story is told of a merchant's wife who was bargaining with one of them about the price of some fish: "Pig of a Tchouvashe! dost thou not fear God?" exclaimed the irate housewife. "Why should I fear him?" was the reply; "He is not a writer."

The Tcheremes are another ancient people; a pure Finn race, divided into two families, the hill Tcheremes, and the plain, or wood, Tcheremes. The wood Tcheremes, for the most part lazy and miserly pagans, are hunters and bee-keepers. The hill

Tcheremes are much more civilized, and are reputed to be Christians. Their villages are neat and picturesque; and they themselves are a strong and industrious people.

The Mordvins, another race dwelling on the banks of the Volga, are a prosperous, agricultural community, more thoroughly Russianized than the other neighbouring races, and remarkable for their facility in picking up languages. The men wear the Russian garb; the women plait their hair into numerous braids, and cover it with a tight-fitting helmet, composed of strings of coins and adorned with ribbons, that reaches down to their eyebrows.

The last of the races on the Volga are the Votiaks, so called by the Russians, or, as they call themselves the "*Ut*" or "*Murt*," signifying "man;" who inhabit wretched, filthy huts, but are good agriculturists, and remarkable for their saving propensities. A large number of them are pagans, but they have incorporated into their original belief in Inmoru and other gods Mahometan and Christian tenets, such as a belief in a life after death, in a Paradise, and in a Hell, which they hold to be a place of boiling pitch.

Kasan was the capital of one of the three Tartar Khanates, into which Tamerlane's successors divided Russia, and was founded in the 13th or 14th century. Situated on the river Kasanka, four miles from its confluence with the Volga, it is now the great

centre of commerce between Siberia, Bokhara, and European Russia, and the seat of numerous manufactures; and has a population of 78,000, of which the Tartars, living in a quarter of their own, number 7,000. Though resembling Moscow in its streets and buildings, and sometimes called "Little Moscow," this Tartar population gives it a much more eastern look. In the month of April the melting ice and snow cause an overflow of the Kasanka, and the barren plain covered with water has the appearance of a lake, in the midst of which, as on an island stands the city with its fortress, and churches, and mosques, and minarets.

About fifty miles below Kasan, the Volga, which is here very broad, receives its most important tributary, the Kama, a river 1,100 miles in length, and the great channel of communication with Siberia, and from this point it flows in a direction nearly due south to Simbersk, the centre of a great trade in grain, and the residence of a large number of wealthy landed proprietors. Below Simbersk it turns to the south-east, and at Stavropol bends towards the Ural, thus forming what is known as the bend of Samara; so called from the town of Samara, another centre of trade with Central Asia, and famous for *kumyss*, or fermented mare's milk, which has the reputation of curing diseases of the lungs and of the kidneys and other wasting maladies.

Near Stavropol, on the right hand, are the Jigoulef Hills, a most beautiful range, rising steeply to a height varying from 400 to 600 feet, and clothed with wood, out of which jut here and there promontories crowned with cliffs of blue limestone. Here and there the steep slopes are cut by deep ravines which open out into little valleys, in which nestle villages bordered by bright green sward.

The next place of interest below Samara is Saratof, a large flourishing town, and a great depôt for the corn trade. All around it, and for a distance of from fifty to seventy miles down the banks of the Volga are a series of German colonies, in number about a hundred, with a population of 150,000, and possessing seventy-three Evangelical and seventeen Roman Catholic churches. The largest and most flourishing of these colonies is Ekaterinstadt, or Baronsk, founded, in 1765, by Baron Beauregard, a Dutch emigrant. Agriculture, gardening, and cattle-breeding are the chief occupations of the colonists, but manufacturing industries are by no means neglected, and the trade carried on by the communities is very considerable.

In 1763 a number of foreigners obtained from the Empress Catherine permission to found a colony between Astrakhan and Saratof. The fruitfulness of the soil and the salubrity of the climate soon attracted new settlers, and in a short time a whole chain of

colonies sprang up west of Tsaritzin. In 1764, 65 envoys from the Moravian Brotherhood came to Tsaritzin to choose a suitable spot for the founding of a colony. The vast, lonely steppes, hitherto only trodden by wandering tribes, reminded the pious Moravians of the wanderings of the prophet Elijah, and of the promise made by him to the widow of Sarepta that her barrel of meal should not waste nor her cruise of oil fail. Taking this fancied resemblance as the pointing of the finger of God, they established themselves in this spot, and named their new colony Sarepta. The seal of the community bears a vessel containing ears of corn, and a jar of oil under an olive-tree.

The colonists had to struggle against many hardships and difficulties, in spite of the support of the Government, before the ground could be made to yield fair returns, and remunerative industries could be established, which in the course of time turned Sarepta into a flourishing place. Until a recent date the colonists enjoyed the privileges originally granted to them, namely, exemption from military service and a reduction in the ground rent payable to the State.

The church and the parochial government are vested in a bishop of the evangelical brotherhood, a pastor, an inspector of schools, and a director of finances. Music, both vocal and instrumental, holds an impor-

tant place in both the religious and family life of the Moravians; classical music is specially appreciated among them.

One of the objects of the community in establishing itself at Sarepta was the conversion of the Kalmucks of the Steppe. With this object in view several of the brethren devoted themselves to learning the Kalmuck language, and one of them, the academician Schmidt, translated the New Testament into Kalmuck under the auspices of the Russian Bible Society. The first efforts of the missionaries were very successful; but in 1815 their activity was checked by the Russian Government, which peremptorily forbade the preaching of Christianity to the Kalmucks, and officially numbered such Kalmuck families as had already adopted Christianity among the members of the orthodox Greek Church.

There are also some flourishing German colonies in New Russia, and on the steppe between the Dnieper and the Dniester, the most prosperous of which are perhaps that of Little Liebenthal—composed exclusively of emigrants from Wurtemberg—and the colony of Mennonites on the Sea of Azof.

The German colonists in Russia, including all the establishments on the Volga, in Little and New Russia, in Bessarabia, in the Crimea, in the Caucasus, and on the Sea of Azof, number over 300,000. Though they have brought into cultivation

an enormous tract of steppe, it must be confessed that the end which the Government had in view in encouraging the immigration of German settlers has not in any case been attained. The hope that these colonies would act as agricultural schools, and induce the natives to adopt improved methods of cultivating their land, has proved vain. The Russian is not imitative, and in the native villages adjoining the German settlements everything goes on precisely in the old fashion; the peasant takes no thought for the future, and will only sow what he sees a speedy prospect of reaping. To plant orchards and vineyards, to expend labour on anything that promises a distant return, however great, seems to him a course suited, perhaps, to a German, but utterly unsuited to a Russian.

In the neighbourhood of Tsaritzin the Volga draws very near the Don, and the Tsar Peter conceived the plan of piercing the rocky partition which separates the two rivers and of uniting them by a canal. The idea was not original, for both Seleucus Nicator and the Sultan Selim III. are said to have entertained it. The work was, however, actually begun under Peter, but was ultimately abandoned. A line of railway now connects Tsaritzin with Kalatch on the Don.

Below Tsaritzin the Volga flows through a depression about 27 miles in breadth, which, at the time of the spring floods, presents the appearance of a vast

lake dotted with groups of islands through which the steamers and barges wend their way. It is difficult to imagine a more dreary expanse than that which meets the eye on both banks. On the right, as far as the eye can reach, not a tree nor a shrub breaks the monotonous level. In the early spring a few plants choke the ground, but they soon run out their brief life; and the soil once more resembles ashes, which the parching wind raises into clouds of dust. In August a fresh crop of plants appears, which prolong a forlorn existence until November. The left bank is even drearier; a salt steppe, on which even the meagre vegetation of the right bank is wanting, and which is only here and there dotted with a few wormwood shrubs.

Throughout the whole of this steppe, over an area of many square miles, are found small ponds of brackish water, and a chain of salt lakes which stretch away in a northerly or north-easterly direction. The only elevated spot is Bogdo-Oola, the hill of rock-salt. The largest and most productive of these Lakes, which supply the inland and the western governments with salt, is Lake Elton, with an area of sixty-three square miles, yielding annually 100,000 tons of salt. Wild horses, wolves, foxes, jerboas, and wild goats are the sole natives of these wilds, which are in summer swept by whirlwinds and dust storms that sometimes last for three or four days, and in winter by drifting snow.

Turning once more to the south-east the Volga pours itself through a large delta, and by more than seventy mouths, into the Caspian Sea on its north-west shore; and, though the Caspian is 84 feet below the level of the Black Sea, the fall of the river, through its entire course of 2,400 miles, is only 633 feet. In some parts it is quite shallow; in others, very deep. Owing to the slowness of the stream, and to the spring floods, the bed of the river is always changing, and sandbanks constantly appear in places where a vessel could float a short time before. On the average the river is closed by ice during 170 days in the year.

As has been stated above, the Volga is connected with the Baltic by a system of canals. One of these, constructed under Peter the Great, commences at Vishni-Volotchok, a town situated at the junction of the Zna with the Tvertza, an affluent of the Volga, flowing into it at Tver, and connects the Tvertza with the Msta, which empties itself into Lake Ilmen.[1] Another system connects the affluent, the Sheksna, with the Neva.[2] A third, constructed under Catherine II., connects an affluent of the Kama, which flows into the Volga, with an affluent of the Dwina, and forms a line of traffic between the Caspian and the White Sea.[3] The importance of the Volga for the

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[1] Keith Johnston's "General Gazetteer."
[2] "Murray's Handbook," p. 218.
[3] Keith Johnston's "General Gazetteer."

purpose of carriage may be gathered from the fact that no less than 500 steamers,[1] belonging to various companies, ply upon it, in addition to the many sailing vessels and barges drawn by horses.

The fisheries of the Volga are in the hands of several companies, which give employment to thousands of people. The principal fishing station is Astrakhan, and the principal fish taken are sturgeon, pike, perch, a kind of herring, and bream. "In 1873 the weight of fish caught, not including the quantity which was sold fresh or boiled down for blubber, was about 80,000 tons."[2] The fish held in the highest esteem is a species of sturgeon, called the sterlet; and no state banquet or wedding feast is considered complete without "Eucha," a soup made of sterlet. During the lesser fasts as much as £30 is sometimes given at St. Petersburg for a large live sterlet.[3]

The roes of the sturgeon and the sterlet are the famed caviare, in Russia called Ikra; and the destruction of these fish for the sake of the caviare is now so enormous, that unless some protective enactments are passed the yield will be rapidly diminished.

Another set of fishers, as methodical as men and

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[1] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 30. In "Murray's Handbook" it is stated that 600 steamers navigate the Volga and its affluent the Kama.

[2] Murray's Handbook, p. 290. [3] "Ivan at Home," p. 221.

very destructive, are the pelicans which abound on the banks. Assembling in flocks they form a large semicircle, and with outspread wings drive the fish on to a shallow, out of which there is no escape, and gorge themselves at leisure.

Astrakhan has a population of 48,220, of whom one quarter are Russians, and the remainder Tartars, Kalmucks, Armenians, Jews, Persians, and Bokharans. It is situated about twenty-five miles from the mouth of the Volga, on a series of mounds that rise above the banks of one of the many channels. Though a dirty irregular town, it is a most important seat of commerce, giving employment to an immense number of men and women, and doing a trade of many millions sterling annually. The Caspian trade employs about 1,300 men.[1] The Tartars, who were formerly so numerous as to defend the town against Ivan IV. with 25,000 men, now number only 6,000; and the number is annually diminishing through the migration of family after family to the Crimea or the Caucasus.

The Kalmucks, who are of the Mongolian race, belong to the Œleutes or Western Mongols, who invaded Russia in 1636; and number 87,000 in the provinces of Astrakhan, Stavropol, and the Don.[2] They are of middle height, and have straight black

[1] "Murray's Handbook." [2] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 31.

hair, small narrow eyes set far apart, flat wide noses, high cheek bones, and large protuberant ears. Their skin is yellow and their personal appearance is grimy in the extreme.

They have long had schools for their boys, and have now some for their girls; and books and writing materials are to be seen in their tents. Plundering is their characteristic feature, from which those only escape who partake of their hospitality. The more remote they are from Russian influence, the less and less civilized they become; but they have an aristocracy and princes, *Nojones*, many of whom are possessed of considerable wealth and often serve as officers in the Ural Cossack Regiments. Such of them as are not Pagans, are, like some of their neighbours, the Kirghiz on the opposite bank of the Volga, Buddhists; preserving, though at so great a distance from Thibet, the form of temple and of worship, the order of priests, and the strange beliefs of Lamaism. One observance of these Kalmucks is deserving of notice. The peculiar idea prevails amongst them that a written prayer is efficacious, if only it can be put in motion; and at the entrance of every hut is to be seen an apparatus constructed on the principle of a wind-mill, on which are prayers inscribed by the priest. When the wind sets the sails in motion these prayers are held to rise to heaven for the benefit of the family. The priests

whose duty it is to offer prayers for the whole community, have an equally convenient method of discharging these sacred obligations. The prayers are thrust into a wooden cylinder; and the priest squatting down beside it, leisurely turns the cylinder with one hand, whilst he holds his pipe in the other.

The Kirghiz, whose name some derive from Kirghiz, an ancient worthy of the race, and who term themselves Sarakaissaks, *Steppe Cossacks*, are supposed to have come from the confines of China, and to have accompanied the Mongols and Tartars into Europe. Such of them as are not Buddhists and Pagans are Mahometans; but their women enjoy much more liberty than is sanctioned by the Koran; and their religion is altogether rather lax. They are divided into three hordes, each with its separate chief or Khan; and for the last century have been Russian subjects, without, however, the payment of any tribute, but under obligation to give children or relations of the Khan, as hostages for good behaviour. Their occupation is the breeding of horses, cattle, camels, and sheep, which they part with mostly by barter, to the Russian merchants. They supply Russia with a very large quantity of tallow, wool, felt, and sheep-skins, and also with the much prized black lamb-skins. When the Khan, for the purpose of barter and other business, visits Orenburg, he is received with royal honours.

To the north of the government of Astrakhan, and due east of Samara on the Volga, is the government of Orenburg. Its chief commercial products are salt and minerals; gold, copper, and iron being found in the southern ranges of the Ural Mountains. The chief city is Orenburg, which is strongly fortified, and is the garrison and camp of a large army, which has not only to keep in order the Kirghiz clans, but is the reserve from which men are drawn to reinforce the army in Turkestan. As it holds the gateway to Northern and Central Asia, the garrison is necessarily very strong. Up to 1867, Orenburg was also the seat of the government which ruled the Russian possessions in Central Asia; and it has been for years, and still continues to be, one of the great centres of the Central Asian trade.

ASTRAKHAN.

CHAPTER XII.

LITTLE RUSSIA AND SOUTH RUSSIA.

History of Early Inhabitants — Cossacks — Zaporogians — Villages — Kharkof — Kief — The Pechersk Laura — South Russia — The Don Cossacks — Cossacks of the Black Sea — —New Russia — Refugees — Babas — Locusts — Odessa.

LITTLE RUSSIA consists of the governments of Podolia, Volhynia, Kief, Tchernigof, Poltava, and Kharkof.

The steppes of the Lower Don and of the Dnieper were, from the days of Rurik onwards, infested by warlike nomad tribes, amongst whom the Khazars, Patzinaks, and Polovsti were specially formidable to their Russian neighbours. To this fact is attributable the frequent mention made of the existence in these districts of so-called "groden," strong places, in which the Princes, or their representatives, resided, and within whose walls the country people found refuge from the inroads of the robber hordes. These "groden" developed later into the towns of Tchernigof, Kief, Belgorod, and others. If the countryman's position was insecure in those times, when he had so often to exchange the plough for the sword, matters became infinitely worse when the Tartars

appeared on the scene, and wasted the country with fire and sword. The only refuge then to be found was within the fortified places, whence the people could, as occasion offered, issue forth to make reprisals on their foes.

From this period dates the gradual development of two distinct classes among the population; the citizens, dwelling in the towns or groden, and the armed peasantry, known henceforward under the name of Cossack.

The Tartars having subjugated the whole country between the Volga and the Dnieper, the natives took refuge in great numbers on the Lower Don, near the Sea of Azof, and below the rapids of the Dnieper below Ekaterinoslaf. In time they were joined here by other fugitives, Polovsti, Kalmucks, Russians, and Lithuanians; the Russian language and the orthodox religion formed the common bond between these heterogeneous elements.

The national poetry gives romantic descriptions of the life of the Cossack. Coursing over the steppes on his fiery charger, he courted danger and despised death. If he fell, he kissed the little bag of native earth which he bore in his bosom, and his last sigh was a blessing on his loved ones at home. If laden with booty he returned to his home, he lived free from care, dispensing a splendid hospitality, and mirth and revel followed on danger and privation.

In the course of time the Cossacks acquired a settled organization, and branched off into different associations and confraternities. As they now exist they may be divided into the Don and the Dnieper Cossacks. From these latter spring the dwellers in the Ukraine and the Little Russians with whom we are now concerned.

The river Dnieper, which gives the name to the one branch, rises in the government of Smolensk, and passing through the town of Smolensk, where it becomes navigable, follows a winding course of 1,230 miles, and enters the Black Sea on the north. One of its affluents, the Prypet, is connected by a canal with the northern Bug, an affluent of the Vistula, so that water communication exists between the Dnieper and the Baltic Sea. From Ekaterinoslaf to Kitkas, a distance of forty-seven miles, a series of cataracts and rapids entirely stop the navigation of the Dnieper, and nothing but timber can pass. If a canal were made between these points, with a system of locks, a brisk trade would be established, and Kherson would recover from the neglected state into which it has fallen.[1]

Originally the Dnieper Cossacks occupied merely the country in the immediate neighbourhood of the Dnieper; but later on they extended their domain

[1] "Murray's Handbook of Russia," p. 341.

westward to Lake Koujal and the Dniester, eastward to the Kalmius, and northward nearly to Kief.

To protect Poland from Tartar raids, the Polish king entrusted to the keeping of the Cossacks the whole south-east frontier of Poland, the former Grand Duchy of Kief, which acquired the name of Ukraine, "border land," and also of Little Russia, in contradistinction to the Grand Duchy of Moscow or Great Russia. Those who remained dwelling by the rapids of the Dnieper obtained the name of Zaporogians, those dwelling beyond the rapids. The association of the Zaporogians was the purest Communism: all were equal; and to guard against the interference of home cares with their duties, marriage was decreed illegal. In later times this rule was relaxed, but the unmarried continued to form the ruling caste.

The centre of government, the Setscha, was established on some inaccessible spot, ultimately on the island of Khoritza, below the rapids, on which the unmarried men and the members of the government resided. The chief, called Ataman or Hetman, elected for a fixed period, usually for a year, had extensive powers, and received unconditional obedience from his subjects; but as soon as a new Hetman was chosen, the former one returned to his place in the ranks of his brethren. The villages were inhabited by the married members, whilst the peasants, mostly prisoners of war, dwelt in outlying buildings.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the piratical expeditions of the Zaporogians assumed such proportions, that the Turks were compelled to erect two fortresses at the mouths of the Dnieper, and to bar the entrance of the river with a chain. The Cossacks, however, soon triumphed over these obstacles, and carried their depredations to Sinope, Trebizond, and other towns of Asia Minor, and even threatened Constantinople. The Cossacks north of the rapids were in close alliance with the Zaporogians, but betook themselves to agricultural pursuits, and lived in families.

The Zaporogians have been compared to the Knights of Malta and to other religious brotherhoods, the main object of whose existence was the extirpation of the Infidel. But, in point of fact, their raids were instigated far more by greed for plunder than by religious zeal; and, in later times, hatred of the Poles and of the Romish Church took the place of hostility against Islam. These Polish wars were carried on by both sides with unexampled ferocity, and the history of the period is a tissue of horrors, only relieved here and there by occasional deeds of real heroism. When, after the suppression of the insurrection of the Ural Cossacks, in 1775, the rule of the Zaporogian Setscha was abolished, a considerable portion of the community refused to disarm in obedience to the Government, and took service in Turkey.

An appeal made to the Zaporogians at the outbreak of the Crimean war resulted in the formation of a corps of 12,000 well-armed Cossacks; and, in recognition of their services at this juncture, new privileges and considerable grants of land on the Kuban were subsequently granted to them.

In Little Russia and the Ukraine the forests, which clothe so large a portion of Great Russia, have entirely disappeared; on all sides, as far as the eye can reach, extends the level steppe, diversified only by little copses and patches of brushwood. Hamlets such as those of Great Russia are unknown; the inhabitants reside either in homesteads, *chutors*, scattered singly over the steppe, or in large "church villages," *slobodes*. These slobodes are of very considerable size, sometimes straggling for a distance of two miles along the high road, and contain from three to four thousand inhabitants. They are, as a rule, situated in some comparatively sheltered spot, where a stream has hollowed a little valley in the level surface of the steppe. Each house has its own well-stocked vegetable and flower garden, and stands half-hidden in thickets of elder. Near to the villages song-birds of many sorts, and especially nightingales, in great numbers frequent the copses and thickets. The nightingales from these districts enjoy so high a reputation that Russian merchants will pay as much as £12 or £15 for a fine specimen; and

there is scarcely a place of public entertainment in Moscow where from November till June the song of a caged nightingale may not be heard. The stork, too, is a valued guest, and is to be seen standing on the roof of the house on one of his long slim legs by the side of the nest, out of which the long elastic neck of his mate is peering, and watching her with the closest affection.

The village population consists of nobles, free peasants, and emancipated serfs. The free peasant, proud of his ancestry and of the name of Cossack, keeps aloof from the emancipated serfs, and the two classes seldom intermarry. The great slobodes of the south are the cradle of the lower nobility. In culture, dress, and manner of life these petty nobles are not to be distinguished from the peasantry, and have retained no outer sign of lofty origin save their patents of nobility. In the south of Great Russia, as in Little Russia, there are numbers of these impoverished nobles, forming, as it were, a class apart, and termed Odnodworizi. Of late years the Government has subjected their claims to a close scrutiny, and many hundreds have been struck off the rolls.

A love of cleanliness and order distinguishes the Little Russian very favourably from his neighbours in Great and White Russia. The peasants' houses can boast of some degree of comfort, and even possess

a regular sleeping room, usually half-filled up by a huge bed piled with feather pillows, and by a large ironbound chest, containing the clothes and linen of the family. The tables and benches in the living room are kept well scrubbed; bunches of dried flowers and grasses decorate the shrine; and a glazed cupboard displays an array of glass and crockery, and sometimes even a set of silver spoons.

The position of the women is infinitely superior to that of their countrywomen in Great Russia; and the patriarchal system, so prevalent in the north, does not find favour here. The young folk are left to manage their own love affairs; and a young man on marrying invariably leaves his father's house and has a home of his own.

The difference between the Great and the Little Russians in character, in manners and customs, and in history is so considerable, that the want of perfect sympathy between them is not surprising. The Cossack calls his cousin "Moskal," Muscovite; and he, in return, talks contemptuously of the "Khocol," which means, literally, "tuft." The Little Russians had, and still have, the habit of shaving the hair off the lower part of the head, and of letting the rest grow in a long thick tuft, which either falls loose about the ears, or is plaited and wound round the head; hence the nickname. Amongst the Great Russians, deeds of valour and stirring adventures

form the staple subjects of the national poetry; whilst in Little Russia the aspect of nature, the trees and plants, the animal world, the sun, moon, and stars, the sun's heat and the winter's cold, are more common themes.

In winter the steppes of Little Russia resemble the tundras of Siberia. Fierce east winds drive clouds of snow across the frozen plains, and almost overwhelm the habitations with drifts. In March the air is filled with the cries of birds of passage. In June the landscape is bright with flowers, and the air sweet with their perfume. Then comes the hay harvest, followed by the grain harvest, which is over by September; and in November low heavy clouds settle on the plains, through which the sun seldom shines; and the birds of passage take their flight back to the south.

Kharkof, the chief town of the Government of that name, and the seat of an University, has 90,000 inhabitants, and is, next to Kief, not only the most important town in Little Russia, but in many respects one of the chief cities of the Empire. Its position, at the junction of the three main routes to the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof, renders it the head-quarters of the trade between Northern and Southern Russia.

Poltava, the chief town of the government of the same name, with 31,000 inhabitants, is built partly

on the high bank of the river Vorskla, partly on the brink of a deep gorge. The famous battle-field, on which the victorious career of Charles XII. was finally checked, lies to the north-east of the town, and is a level plateau bounded to the north by a steep ravine. It was the natural configuration of the ground which decided the fate of the battle. The Swedes had at the outset the best of the day; but, when the Russian cavalry was in full flight towards this ravine, slackened their pursuit; upon which the Russians rallied, the success was reversed, and the day ended in the total defeat of the Swedish army. On the field is a tumulus about sixty feet high, surmounted by a cross, under which the Russians who fell lie buried.

No Russian town is so picturesquely situated as Kief. It stands on the high right bank of the Dnieper, gardens and country houses covering the declivities and reaching down to the water's edge; and looks upon the towers of the Pechersk Laura, which rise above the horizon at a distance of sixteen miles.

Kief, first mentioned in Nestor's chronicles, was, according to him, founded by Kih, a leader of the Polanes; but its authentic history begins when the two Varangian knights Ascold and Dir, Rurik's brothers in arms, landed there on an expedition down the Dnieper, and embraced Christianity at Byzantium. Twenty years later Oleg, having treacherously

murdered Ascold and Dir, made Kief the capital of the grand duchy, and determined that it should be "the mother of all Russian cities." Before Vladimir the Great came to the throne the city possessed two Christian churches, one of which was built over Ascold's grave by Olga, wife of the grand Prince Igor. Vladimir enlarged the town; and erected the church of St. Basil on the hill where the idol Perun had formerly stood, and in another quarter a church of stone dedicated to the Assumption, which received the name of Tenth Church, because he devoted to it the tenth of his revenue. Ancient writers affirm that in the eleventh century no fewer than 400 churches were within the walls of Kief. It became in later times the head-quarters of the government and the see of the Metropolitan, and, thanks to its trade with Byzantium, the first town of Russia. Its importance and power lasted until the Tartar invasion in 1240, when Batu Khan took it after a long siege. Moved by the valour of its defender, the Boyard Demitrius, he gave the wounded hero his life, but showed no mercy to the inhabitants, and Kief became a heap of ruins. Some years later the city was rebuilt, and again burnt down and devastated by Tartars, Poles, and Lithuanians in turn; and at last it was incorporated in the kingdom of Poland, and received back from the Polish king various privileges, which helped to raise it once again to prosperity.

In 1667, that part of the Ukraine which was on the left bank of the Dnieper passed by the treaty of Androussovo into the possession of the Tsars; and Kief, after 414 years, became Russian once more. In 1834 the University of St. Vladimir was transferred hither from Wilna, and since the completion of the rail-road between St. Petersburg and the Black Sea, Kief has made great advances, and the population has increased to 100,000. The Kievo-Pecherskaya Laura, that is, the Pechorskoi Monastery, is the oldest monastic institution and the first in rank in Russia; two others only being entitled to the title of "Laura," namely, Troitsa near Moscow, and Alexander Nevski at St. Petersburg. The designation is oriental; cells or caverns where several anchorites dwelt, as was the case in the Thebaid, were called Lauras, and were the originals of monasteries.

The Laura Pecherskaya was built in 1055; it stands within the immense fortress of Pechersk, and contains within its circuit sixteen churches, of which the most famous, the Church of the Ascension, has seven gilt cupolas, a superb belfry 300 feet high, and an immense store of valuable vestments, church plate, and jewelled ikons. The huge guest-houses of the Laura are never empty of pilgrims, who to the number of 200,000 annually come from every part of the empire to visit the catacombs; and, though allowed to stay there two weeks, are fed gratuitously for three

days. The catacombs, dedicated to St. Anthony, are hollowed out of the precipitous cliffs of limestone which overhang the river, and are reached by a passage which descends from the church. Ranged in niches, in open coffins, and wrapped in cloth and silk, are the bodies of martyrs and sainted prelates, with their faces uncovered and their hands so placed as to receive the kisses of the pilgrims. Amongst them, in the first catacomb, is Nestor the annalist; and at the end St. Anthony, close to the chapel in which he spent fifteen years without breathing the fresh air. But the most disagreeable part of the scene is the row of small windows, behind which eleven martyrs had themselves built into a stone wall, leaving only these apertures through which to receive their food.[1] These are in the catacombs of St. Theodosius, situated to the south of the catacombs of St. Anthony, in which there is also a cell containing the bodies of the first twelve founders of the monastery.

The Holy Chrysm, or *Myro*, is prepared in two places only, in Moscow and here in the chapel attached to the refectory; and from these two sanctuaries it is sent to all the Orthodox Churches of the East.

SOUTH RUSSIA.

The territory of the Don Cossacks extends south

[1] "Murray's Handbook," p. 322.

of the governments of Saratof and of Voronetz to the Sea of Azof; on the west it is bounded by the government of Ekaterinoslaf; on the east it approaches the Volga; and it is traversed by the Don and its tributaries. It consists partly of level plains, and partly of ranges of low hills. The Don, the ancient Tanais, rises in the small lake Iranozea in the government of Tula, and after a course, generally south, of 995 miles, through unattractive scenery of arid flats varied by occasional chalk hills, enters into the Sea of Azof through many mouths. The navigation, which commences about midway in its course, is difficult in summer when the water is low; but the quantity of goods floated annually down it is estimated at a value of nearly a million sterling. The fisheries produce annually about 20,000 tons, chiefly of sturgeons, exclusive of a kind of herrings of which seven millions are taken. In all probability the progenitors of the Don Cossacks were fugitives from the oppression of the Russian Boyards, or from the cruelties of Ivan the Terrible. To these were added wanderers from Little Russia and from the country of the Zaporogians, and refugees from Poland, Greece, and Turkey. Every new comer was welcome, and was bound solely to adopt the Russian language and religion. These adventurers lived in small bands, occupying themselves in plunder and theft; and not only went on marauding expeditions to the coasts of the Black Sea and of the Sea of

Azof, but fell with perfect impartiality upon Russian towns as well. In the second half of the 16th century, however, the whole community of Don Cossacks united to defend Christendom from the attacks of the Turks and Tartars, and took and held for five years the Turkish fortress of Azof. The rules and regulations of this Don Cossack league were in the main similar to those of the Zaporogians, with whom they kept up close intercourse. They erected the little fortified town of Tcherkask on one of the seven islands of the Lower Don, and made it their chief place of assembly; and founded many other small towns, *stanitsas*, stations, and winter camps, which in the 17th century amounted to more than a hundred. The virtues and vices inherent in all communities where war is the main object of life were to be met with amongst them. Their penal code was stern and simple; the usual sentence passed on theft, treachery, or cowardice being "into the sack and into the river." In 1570 the Don Cossacks recognized the sovereignty of the Tsars; who, appreciating the services which such a community might render in the Tartar and Turkish wars, granted them large privileges. But it was in vain that the Government sought to restrain the depredations which their new subjects carried on in the Crimea and in Turkey in times of peace. They continued to rob and murder the Turkish, Persian, and Russian merchants that came in their

way; and at intervals organized great plundering expeditions up the Volga, in which they received the hearty co-operation of the peasants.

The severe retaliatory measures employed by the Government produced frequent revolts, which were put down with a strong hand. The last important insurrection took place under the leadership of Boulavine and Nekrassof, during the reign of Peter the Great; 7,000 Cossacks perished, either in battle or by the hand of the executioner, and the members of the community were ordered to betake themselves to agricultural pursuits.

Up to this time the cultivation of the land had always been considered a degrading occupation; and on its becoming known, in 1693, that some villagers on the Khoper and the Medrieditza had engaged in it, the order was given at all the stanitsas that no Cossack should plough land or sow seed under pain of being maltreated and despoiled of his goods. By degrees this prohibition has been relaxed, and is now virtually abolished; and ploughed lands and corn-fields are to be seen around all the Cossack settlements.

The land of the Cossacks is distributed amongst the people in different ways in different localities. Mr. Wallace, who alone seems to have made their land customs a subject of inquiry, gives a description of the arrangements in the stanitsa of Kazanskaya. "The

whole of the arable land, with the exception of a portion reserved for minors, has been divided into a number of lots corresponding to the number of males who have attained the age of seventeen. The arrangement has been made for a term of six years. Those who attain the age of seventeen during that period receive a portion of the land held in reserve. Widows receive an amount proportionate to the number of their young children; those who have less than three receive half a share; those who have three receive a full share; and those who have more than three receive two shares. Each member, as soon as he receives his share, is free to do with it as he pleases. One cultivates it himself, another lets it for a yearly sum, and a third gives it to a neighbour on condition of receiving a certain portion of the produce. Some of the richer families cultivate a considerable area."[1] Mr. Wallace mentions a custom which existed up to 1850 of "beating the bounds" of the communal lands, akin to the custom of beating the bounds of an English parish, but exceeding it in severity. "All the boys of the two stanitsas were collected and driven in a body, like sheep, to the intervening frontier; . . . . and at each landmark a number of boys were soundly whipped, to ensure their recollection of the boundary."[2]

[1] "Russia," vol. ii., p. 87.

[2] P. 93.

A considerable difference exists between the Cossacks of the Upper and the Lower Don. The former are for the most part large-limbed, fair, and blue-eyed, and are by nature sluggish and averse to change. Their houses are clean and fairly comfortable, and the white-walled villages, surrounded by orchards, have a pleasant, home-like aspect. The families keep together as in Great Russia, and work in common.

The Cossacks of the Lower Don are of darker complexion and more slender build, and altogether of a more southern type; and are exceedingly vain and boastful, both sexes being absurdly fond of show. In the stanitsas of the south, women and girls, whose homes bear every sign of poverty, are constantly to be met with attired in costly satins and furs. The Cossacks of the Upper Don are a purely agricultural race; those of the Lower Don have, on the other hand, a wide field of other industries open to them. Peter the Great first introduced the culture of the vine on the Don at the stanitsa Ranori, and thus initiated what is now a rapidly increasing industry. The wine is mostly sparkling, a sort of champagne, and is very popular in Russia under the name of "Donshoi" Don champagne.

One characteristic, common to the Upper and Lower Cossacks alike, is to be found in their strong

religious feelings, which find visible expression in the erection of numbers of handsome churches, containing jewelled ikons and richly-decorated altars. Nearly one-fifth of the population belongs to the sect of the Old Believers, who are remarkable for piety, uprightness, and rigid morality.

If it is a question of a new church or of new bells, the Cossack is ready to make any sacrifice; but, unfortunately, it is not equally easy to rouse him to any interest in intellectual culture, or to induce him to contribute willingly towards the erection of a school. Since 1860, however, the desire for education has spread throughout Russia, and has even reached the Don; and of late years two gymnasiums, in Novo-Tcherkask and Ustz-Medriedinsk, an educational institute for girls, a seminary, six county schools, a parish school for every stanitsa, and 185 village schools have been opened at the expense of the combined stanitsas.

Songs descriptive of former deeds of Cossack valour are still to be heard. They tell of the ancient immigration of the Cossacks, of their varied fortunes, and of the deeds of the famous robber chief, Stenka Rasin, who waged war on the nobles and the clergy, ostensibly for the emancipation of the serfs.

The south of Russia possesses a soil of marvellous fertility; the rich pastures are a grazing ground for

flocks of sheep and herds of oxen. The fisheries, the vineyards, and the salt lakes are all exceedingly productive; coal-mines have been opened in New Russia, and in the Don region anthracite coal has been discovered. For a long time these mineral resources, though known, were mostly neglected. The Cossacks made use of the surface coal themselves, and sold it in the neighbouring towns, but the difficulty of transport to the sea, and the low price of coal brought as ballast by English ships, discouraged the development of the industry. Latterly the opening of the two lines of railway which now connect North and South Russia, and of numerous branch lines, has given a great and yearly increasing impetus to the coal trade. With the increased output of coal the steam navigation on the Don and Volga may be expected to increase, the cost of railway travelling to diminish, and the last remains of the forests to be saved from annihilation. The wholesale destruction of trees has already had very prejudicial effects on the climate. Southern Russia has, however, one great want, which, for the present at least, impedes the development of its immense natural resources. This is the want of men.

The so-called Cossacks of the Black Sea numbered about 20,000 when they first, at the termination of the Crimean War, obtained grants of land on the Kuban. The number was rapidly increased by immigrants

from Little Russia, and from the Cossacks of the Don and the Ural; and this military colony now numbers more than 200,000.

Since the entire subjugation of the Caucasus, the Cossacks of the Kuban have lost much of their former importance and many of their former privileges. They are no longer exempted from universal conscription, but are, as a rule, enrolled in Cossack regiments serving in the Caucasus. The whole district through which the Kuban flows, from Ekaterinodar, the capital of the Cossack stanitsas, to the Black Sea, is a treeless steppe, covered with the burgan or dry spikey grasses mixed with sedge which characterize the steppes of the Black Sea. The steppe extends from the Manytch and the Kuban to the Sea of Azof and the Caspian, merging into the Kalmuck steppes and the salt marshes of the lower Volga, and occupying a space of 45,000 square miles. On the steppe single chutors or homesteads peep forth, which belong chiefly to the Cossack officers. The common people live in kurengs, or villages, a singular medley of homesteads and stacks of hay and sedge; and if any fishing is within reach, of drying-houses for the *Bahick*, dried sturgeon backs. Such villages have no street; each house stands alone, surrounded either by thick burgan or by a sea of mud.

There is little to distinguish the homesteads of the officers from those of the ordinary Cossacks.

A path trodden through the thick grass leads to a marshy, reed-covered streamlet or pond, with its inevitable boat hollowed out of a tree trunk, and its reed-covered fish baskets. Further away lies the *lasktan*, a plot of ground planted with melons, gourds, cucumbers, water-melons, and sunflowers, and alongside of it a piece of ploughed land; a few cattle and sheep graze on the steppe. The owners of such homesteads lead a most primitive existence; owing to the absolute want of labourers each proprietor, be his rank what it may, must, with the help of his household, execute the heaviest field labour. The Cossacks of the Black Sea, or of the Kuban, as they are indiscriminately called, have a difficult and dangerous duty to perform; the frontier line, which they have to guard, is drawn along a swampy sedge-covered tract, whose exhalations breed fevers of a malignant type. Besides a brush with marauding Circassians, the outposts have many an enemy to battle with: snow storms in winter and floods in spring; in summer the most oppressive heat and such a plague of flies that the face must be protected by a mask; and in autumn fresh floods, fog, and fever. When not on guard their chief employment is cattle breeding on the steppes and fishing in the Black Sea; and it is not surprising that the hardships of their life have made them in general gloomy and morose.

NEW RUSSIA.

The provinces of Ekaterinoslaf and Kherson, which are bounded by Little Russia on the north, and the Black Sea and the government of Taurida on the south, on the east by the territory of the Don Cossacks, and on the west by the Dniester, are popularly called New Russia. With the exception of the lands bordering on the rivers, which are moderately fertile, and of the extreme northern portion of Kherson, which is covered with forests, nearly the whole surface is a vast steppe or plain without trees; in some parts the thin arid soil produces little herbage; in others grass growing to the height of a man. A railway connecting Kharkof with Odessa passes through the chief towns in the north; Krentschug, a pretty, thriving town on the Dnieper, with 24,000 inhabitants; Elisabetgrad, a place of great trade in tallow, grain, and cattle; Olviopol, on the Bug, the centre of a district abounding in wheat. But south of this, extending to the Black Sea, is a vast solitude, broken only by wild animals and birds, and by the shepherds with their flocks. The inhabitants, like their ancestors in the days of Herodotus, live in earth-huts, built of the friable shell limestone of the district. Each house is surrounded by a wattled fence, and crowned with the inevitable stork's nest; but there is no sign of a garden, nor even a bush to relieve the

desolation of the scene. To the original inhabitants have been added in the course of years Great and Little Russians, Poles, Armenians, Servians, Moldavians, Swiss, French, Italians, and gipsies. In this mixed population the Russians hold the chief place, and are mainly adventurers, fugitive serfs, and escaped criminals, who have found an asylum in these trackless wastes, and commenced the formation of villages and communes. Bee-keeping and sheep-farming are the chief industries, for which the extensive good pasturage, the dry warm climate, and the short winter are in every way favourable. Snow storms in winter, steppe fires in summer, and the devastations of the locusts, are the chief enemies of the *Ishabans*, or shepherds, and of their flocks.

Every now and then appear tumuli, erected in a remote past by former inhabitants of this region, and called by the people *Kurgans*. Tumuli of like character, but varying in form, are found through the whole of Southern Siberia as far as the district of the Amoor. They have been divided into two classes: *Grave Kurgans*, or mounds erected over burial-places; and *Simple Kurgans*, which are supposed, in spite of the stone figures, *Babas*, on their summits, to be landmarks. The babas are, as a rule, roughly hewn female figures somewhat larger than life, with a decidedly Mongol type of countenance. Many have been removed from their original position, some to be

utilized as gate-posts, others as curbstones for the high road, and others, which are in the best state of preservation, as ornaments in the gardens near the towns.

South of these steppes is the northern coast of the Black Sea, one continued plain abounding in inland lakes and in lagunes called *Limans;* both of which, by the action of the summer sun, are covered with a saline crust resembling ice in appearance. In the month of July hundreds of workmen are engaged, under official supervision, in collecting the salt, which is a monopoly of the crown; an easy labour when the ground beneath is dry and hard, but necessitating, when the bottom is muddy, the use of long boards fastened to the feet to make the footing secure.

Azof, which is now only a cluster of hovels away from the shore, was for a long period the emporium of the vast territory watered by the Don. Odessa is now the great mercantile city of the south of Russia. It is situated to the south-west of an old city called Odessus, on a site named by the Genoese when they came to the shores of the Euxine, *La Ginestra*, "probably because it was overgrown with the *Genista tinctoria*, the dyer's broom."[1] On the site now occupied by Odessa, a Tartar chief built a fortress called Hadji Bey; this

[1] Murray's "Handbook of Russia," p. 311.

fell in the sixteenth century into the hands of the Turks, and was held by them until the cession of the province of Otchakof to Russia in 1791. In the reign of Catherine the Great a town with a harbour was constructed on the spot and called Odessa. It now contains more than 150,000 inhabitants of mixed nationalities, of whom 12,000 are Jews. By means of the system of canals that connect the rivers with the corn-growing districts, and of the rapidly-extending railway communication, the agriculturists of Central Russia are enabled to bring their produce to the port at a cheap rate, and to sell at remunerative prices. The exports are chiefly grain of all kinds, and wool; and in 1874 were of the value of £7,829,649; the imports at the same date exceeded £7,000,000.[1]

The city is built on a cliff of very crumbling limestone, which in the summer months sends up volumes of dust. The soil is of little depth and so sterile that trees and shrubs, with the exception of the acacia, will not grow, and gardening, though carried on at considerable expense, produces no satisfactory results. The rich inhabitants have on the steppe their *Chutors*, or villas, to which they gladly retire from the dust, glare and barrenness of the town. Along the narrow slip between the shore and the cliff is a

[1] Keith Johnston. "A General Dictionary of Geography."

bright garden, which communicates with the boulevard above by a gigantic staircase of 204 steps, built on arches. The University, founded in 1865, gives the best education that is to be had in Russia, and has 43 professors, and 252 students. There are also a school for girls of the upper classes, and schools of navigation and of commerce.

The city is strongly fortified. On the 21st of April, 1854, the Anglo-French fleet destroyed the mole and the barracks; and in the following May the English steam-frigate, the "Tiger," ran aground here in a fog, and was destroyed by the Russian artillery, and her crew made prisoners of war.

ODESSA.

CHAPTER XIII.

BESSARABIA.

Position of the Country—Inhabitants—Manners and Customs.

THE government of Bessarabia lies between the Black Sea, the Dniester, and the Pruth. It has an area of about 14,000 square miles, and a population of more than a million. The country was in the 7th century conquered by the Besses, from whom it acquired its name; and in the 13th century belonged to Moldavia. By the treaty of Kutchuk Kamardshi it was formally relinquished to the Tartar Khan, and was finally acquired by its present masters at the peace of Bucharest in 1812. On this occasion Russia made it a stipulation that such Boyards as owned property in both Bessarabia and Moldavia should within eighteen months domicile themselves permanently in one of these countries, and sell their estates in the other.

In natural configuration, and in the character of its population, Bessarabia differs widely from the neighbouring government of Kherson. The Danube on the south, and the many small tributaries of the

Pruth and the Dniester, contribute largely to the superior fertility of the country. Of the population three-fourths are Moldavians and belong to the Greek orthodox Church; the remaining fourth consists of a mixture of Great Russians, Poles, Germans, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, Jews, and gipsies.

The Bessarabians, or eastern Moldavians, like the members of most races that have long endured the yoke of slavery and despotism, are both indolent and apathetic; and the fertile nature of their native soil enables them to satisfy their moderate wants at the cost of a very little labour. Neither during the unsettled times when they were still subject to the Porte, nor more recently under the rule of a perfect legion of petty Russian officials, have they ever enjoyed any security for their property; and so, naturally enough, they see little object in exerting themselves to acquire that which they are not likely to be allowed peacefully to enjoy.

Both men and women are over middle height, and of slender though wiry build. Both sexes pride themselves on the beauty and abundance of their hair. The national costume is pretty and picturesque; but in the towns all women who aim at holding a superior position pride themselves on appearing in European dress. A naked foot, however, may often be seen peeping out from under a smart gown!

The peasant's dwellings are mostly three-roomed,

and are generally built of wattled twigs plastered over with mud. Though very unattractive externally, the interior is neither dirty nor uncomfortable; carpets cover the tables and benches; and on a huge chest, which is supposed to contain the dower *sestre* of the daughter of the house, is piled a great heap of carpets and cushions. The wealth of the family and the industry of its mistress are reckoned to be proportionate to the height of this pile.

The principal staple of food is *mamaliga*, dough made of maize-flour, which is eaten several times a day either with cheese made of ewes' milk or with butter or fat. Drunkenness is common among all classes.

The Bessarabians, who are nominally of the Orthodox Greek Church, mingle with observance of its teaching a number of superstitions regarding the times and seasons at which works are to be begun and ended, and a belief in good house-spirits, who are considered to dwell in the harmless ringed snakes nurtured in their homes. Singing and dancing are popular amusements; their many national songs of a flowing poetical character, sung in a melancholy monotonous tone, seem to be an expression of the long sufferings and oppression undergone by their race. The chief towns are Kishenef, with a population of 100,000, the see of a metropolitan, and the centre of a considerable trade

in tallow, wool, wheat, hides, tobacco and prunes; Bender, held by the Genoese in the 12th century, and memorable as the site of the camp of Charles XII. after the battle of Poltova, and now the seat of a large timber trade; Akerman, in the neighbourhood of salt lakes, from which a large quantity of salt is obtained; and Ismail.

BENDER.

CHAPTER XIV.

TAURIDA AND THE CRIMEA.

Nogai Tartars — Climate — Bakhtchisarai — Chufut Kalé — Karasu-Bazar — Simpheropol — Sevastopol — Khersonesus — Balaclava — Yalta — Theodosia — Kertch.

THE government of Taurida comprises a territory on the mainland, bounded by the Dnieper, its affluent the Konska, the Sea of Azof, and the peninsula of the Crimea; it has an area of 24,500 square miles, and a population of 704,000. The mainland is almost entirely a vast steppe, in many parts sterile, with a few lakes dotted about it here and there. It is connected by the isthmus of Perekop with the Crimea; of which the portion north of the river Salghur, which rises beyond Simpheropol and falls into the Sea of Azof, is also a steppe, destitute of trees, but, for the most part, covered with luxuriant pasture. The climate is here cold and damp in winter and oppressively hot in summer, especially near the Putrid Sea, where a collection of stagnant waters exhale pestilential vapours. The mainland steppe was formerly occupied by the

Nogai Tartars, who emigrated to Turkey shortly after the Crimean war, and is now inhabited by Russian, German, and Bulgarian colonists.[1] The steppe in the peninsula is still occupied by the Crim Tartars, who form two-thirds of the inhabitants of the Crimea—a race universally esteemed for their frugality, cleanliness, and general good behaviour. Like the Nogai Tartars they were discontented at the ukase of 1874—which enforced a new military code—and also began an exodus to Turkey; but considerable indulgences and concessions in military matters, coupled with an intimation that under no circumstances would they be permitted to emigrate to Turkey, have checked this exodus.

The climate in the southern parts of the Crimea is very mild. A range of mountains, of which the Tchatyr Dagh, or Tent Mountain, rises to the height of 5,110 feet above the level of the sea, extends in the form of an amphitheatre for a distance of more than a hundred miles, and shelters the coast from the cold winds of the north. Ravines, slopes, valleys, woods, meadows, and gardens alternate with precipitous groups of bare cliffs; pines and cypresses mingle their sombre green with the shining foliage of orange-trees and pomegranates, and with the grey tints of the olive; and on the green hill slopes rise

[1] Wallace's "Russia," vol. ii., p. 54.

villages, and the Italian villas and country-houses of the Russian nobles. According to Dr. Clarke, "if there exists a terrestrial paradise, it is to be found between Kutchuk-Koi and Sudak, on the south coast of the Crimea." But a terrestrial paradise such as this is not without its drawbacks; tarantulas, centipedes, scorpions, and other venomous insects abound, fevers are not uncommon, and locusts commit the most terrible devastations.

No country is richer in mythical and historical traditions than the Crimea, the ancient Taurian Khersonese, the classic land of the Argonauts and of the warlike race of the Amazons.

As early as 600 years B.C. Greek Colonies flourished in Crimea. It subsequently formed part of the Bosporian kingdom; and after the fall of Mithridates, was incorporated in the Roman Empire. The time of the great migrations saw the Crimea under the dominion of various succeeding races.

First appeared the Alanes; then the Goths, who, in 376, were in their turn expelled by the Huns. The Byzantine Emperor next became lord of the land; which was, however, overrun by the Illyrians and Bulgarians in 501, and by the Turks and Khazars about sixty years later.

The Russians first made their appearance in the tenth century. In 1050 the Komans, or Polovtses, and other kindred tribes occupied the Crimea, but

they were almost annihilated in 1223 by the Mongols. Soon after, the Italians established themselves on the southern coasts.

The Genoese built the town of Kaffa on the site of the ancient Theodosia, and appropriated the whole trade of the country. Under Tchingiz Khan the Tartars got these rich regions for a heritage, and here they have maintained themselves more persistently than elsewhere.

The Crimean Tartars may be divided into three classes: the Coast Tartars; the Mountain Tartars; and the Steppe Tartars. The Steppe Tartars have preserved the small stature, broad flat faces, small slanting eyes, and protruding cheek-bones of the pure Mongol type. The Hill Tartars, especially those of a higher class, show signs of having in their veins a large admixture of Turkish blood; but the Tartars of the south coasts have so entirely lost all the distinctive features of their race that they go by the opprobrious name of "Mur-Tat," renegades.

The Crimea at first formed part of the Great Tartar Khanate of Kiptchak; in which, almost immediately after its foundation, the Mahometan religion became dominant. When the Khanate fell to pieces in the fifteenth century, the family of Ghyreys rose to power, and with the help of the Turks expelled the Genoese, who had held colonies on the coasts for a century and a half. The Turks established them-

selves on the coasts and in the seaports; and the Tartars, in subservience to the Porte, occupied the hills and the interior, whence they made their dreadful incursions to the northern shores of the Black Sea, the Caucasus, and the mouths of the Danube. Catherine II., in 1736, succeeded in arresting their progress; in 1771 Sahym Girey was elected Khan under the suzerainty of Russia; and in 1784 the Peninsula was annexed to the Russian Empire. The province of Taurida is now regarded by the Government as one of the most important and valuable of Russian possessions.

The Crim Tartars are distinguished from the Tartars of the mainland by more fixed habits of life and by their higher culture, to which they attained at an early period. They are divided into three classes: the *Mourzas* or nobles, of whom there are about 250 families; the *Mollahs* or Mahometan clergy, and the peasants. A *Mollah* resides in every village, and is not only armed with the chief authority, but endowed with considerable property and possessed of many privileges, such as the ploughing, sowing, and reaping of his land by free peasant labour, and freedom from the payment of certain dues. In a country where there are few hotels the position of the *Mollah* marks him as the chief person to offer that hospitality to strangers which is the great feature of the Crim Tartars, and is sorely needed by travellers. Com-

mander Telfer states that a *Mourza*, in whose house he was a guest, "complained sadly of the indolence of his countrymen and co-religionists," and adds: "The Tartars never learn a trade; they work in gardens and orchards from the end of May to the third week in August, during which period it is agreed among them that no festivities shall take place; for the rest of the year they remain idle and enjoy themselves as they can. The Tartars are, however, a hospitable people, those of means among them keeping an *Oda* or free house of call for the benefit of all travellers[1];" which is situated near their own abode.

Bakhtchisarai, the town of gardens, as its name imports, was the residence of the Tartar Khans in the fifteenth century; and, with Karasu-Bazar, was given up to the sole occupation of the Tartars, by a decree of the Empress Catherine. It stretches along the bottom of a deep valley three miles in length. The old palace of the Khans is the chief feature of the town, and around it linger memories of those who formerly inhabited it. One of the traditions of the place has been immortalized by the Russian poet, Poushkin. Adjoining the palace are the mosque and the cemetery, containing tombs of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and of nearly all the Khans since 1654. In the chief street, which is more

1 "The Crimea and Transcaucasia," vol. ii., p. 210.

than a mile long, and in the other narrow, crooked streets, life is carried on in public, and people of all trades are seen following their vocations in open stalls; the baker baking his bread; the tailor sewing his garments; the leather workers and slipper-makers, who predominate, plying their needles and awls. In a suburb is the gipsy quarter, where filthy bronzed gipsies, with thickly matted hair and clothed in scanty rags, dwell in miserable mud huts, and follow the occupation of blacksmiths.

Chufut Kalé, the Jew's fortress, two miles distant, is said to have been occupied by Jews as early as 460 years B. C., and to have been, in 1846, the only town in the world inhabited only by Jews. It was deserted in that year by all, except two families and the curator of the old manuscripts still kept in a library. This desertion was probably due to the difficulty of obtaining water which had to be brought up from the valley below on the backs of mules. A number of Karaim Jews, who date the foundation of their sect in the second century before Christ, settled here at an early period, of which the precise date is uncertain; and on the desertion of this town scattered themselves over the other towns of the Crimea. Their name, Karaim, *readers*, the plural of Kara, marks them as dissenters from the Talmudists and their interpretations, and as advocates of a strict adherence to the text of the Old Testament, and of the rejection of all

Rabbinical traditions. Of the 50,000 which form the community of the Karaims it is computed that 6,000 are in Russia, where they enjoy greater freedom than the Talmudists, and are much respected for their industry, their business habits, and their peaceful disposition.

Karasu-Bazar, the second town assigned by Catherine II. to the Tartars, has a purely oriental character, and consists of miserable habitations of mud and sun-dried bricks. Once celebrated for its cutlery, especially for swords, it has now a mixed trade in tallow, wool, hides, and the black and grey Bokhara lamb-skins; and, owing to the energy of the Armenian merchants who have been permitted to settle here, is a rising town.

Simpheropol, the chief mart and busiest place in the Crimea, is situated on the river Salghir, on a site which from numerous traces of ruined buildings is supposed to have been occupied by an ancient city, and is thought by some to be the site of the fortress Neapolis. The mixed character of its population gives it the name it bears, Simpheropol, the Gathering Town.

The town of Sevastopol, situated on the bay of that name, was a small Tartar village until the year 1784, when the Empress Catherine decreed the construction of the port and fortress under its present name. It has been rendered famous by the events of

the Crimean War, in which its southern portion was destroyed by the Allies in 1855; and though the process of rebuilding is going on, it is still a mass of ruins. Not far distant is Inkerman, a cliff "pierced with the crypts of prehistoric times, of which some were converted into places of Christian worship, it is said, in the first century."[1] One of them forms the crypt church of the Monastery of St. Clement, called after Pope Clement I., "who, exiled to this part of the Taurida by the Emperor Trajan, spent his time in prayer and the conversion of the barbarians, and suffered martyrdom by being thrown into the sea, A.D. 100."

The whole of the south coast of the Crimea is classic or Christian ground. The ancient town of Khersonesus, founded 658 B.C., grew by degrees into the celebrated republic of Khersonesus, or Kherson, passed from the sway of Mithridates into the vassalage of Rome, and was conquered by Vladimir, the Russian prince, in A.D. 833. Having been made a bishopric in 1332, under a bishop of English birth, Ricardus Anglicus, and become a settlement of the Genoese, it was so entirely destroyed in 1363 by Olgerd, Grand Prince of Lithuania, that when the Turks took possession of the Crimea in 1475,[2] they found there nothing but empty houses and desolate

[1] "The Crimea and Transcaucasia," vol. i. p. 22. [2] Ibid.

churches. These ruins furnished materials to the Russians in after years for the building of the city of Sevastopol. Though all interesting relics of antiquity have thus passed away, there still remains near the shore the heap of filth and refuse, known as the Den of Lamachus, raised by command of Glycia on the site of the scene of the murder of her husband, the eldest son of Assander, in the middle of the 4th century.

Balaclava, supposed by Carl Ritter to be the port of the Læstrigones mentioned in the Odyssey, occupied later by Greek colonists, then passing successively into the hands of the Genoese, the Turks, and the Tartars, is now an insignificant village, to which, however, the celebrated Balaclava Charge has given a further historical interest.

Further eastward the scenery becomes more and more beautiful. The mountain chain retreats further inland, fertile slopes descend to the sea, dotted with houses whose gardens and vineyards extend to the water's edge. Here are Livadia, the imperial residence, Alupka, the palace of Prince Woronzof, and a colony of country-houses, in which architecture has run as wild as on the islands of the Neva.

Yalta has of late years become a town of hotels and a fashionable bathing-place. Its history commences in the 12th century; but numerous groups of stone, resembling the Druidical or Celtic remains

of Western Europe, speak of some earlier settlement, probably of the Tauri. The finest panoramic view in the Crimea is to be obtained from the highest point of the promontory of Yalta.

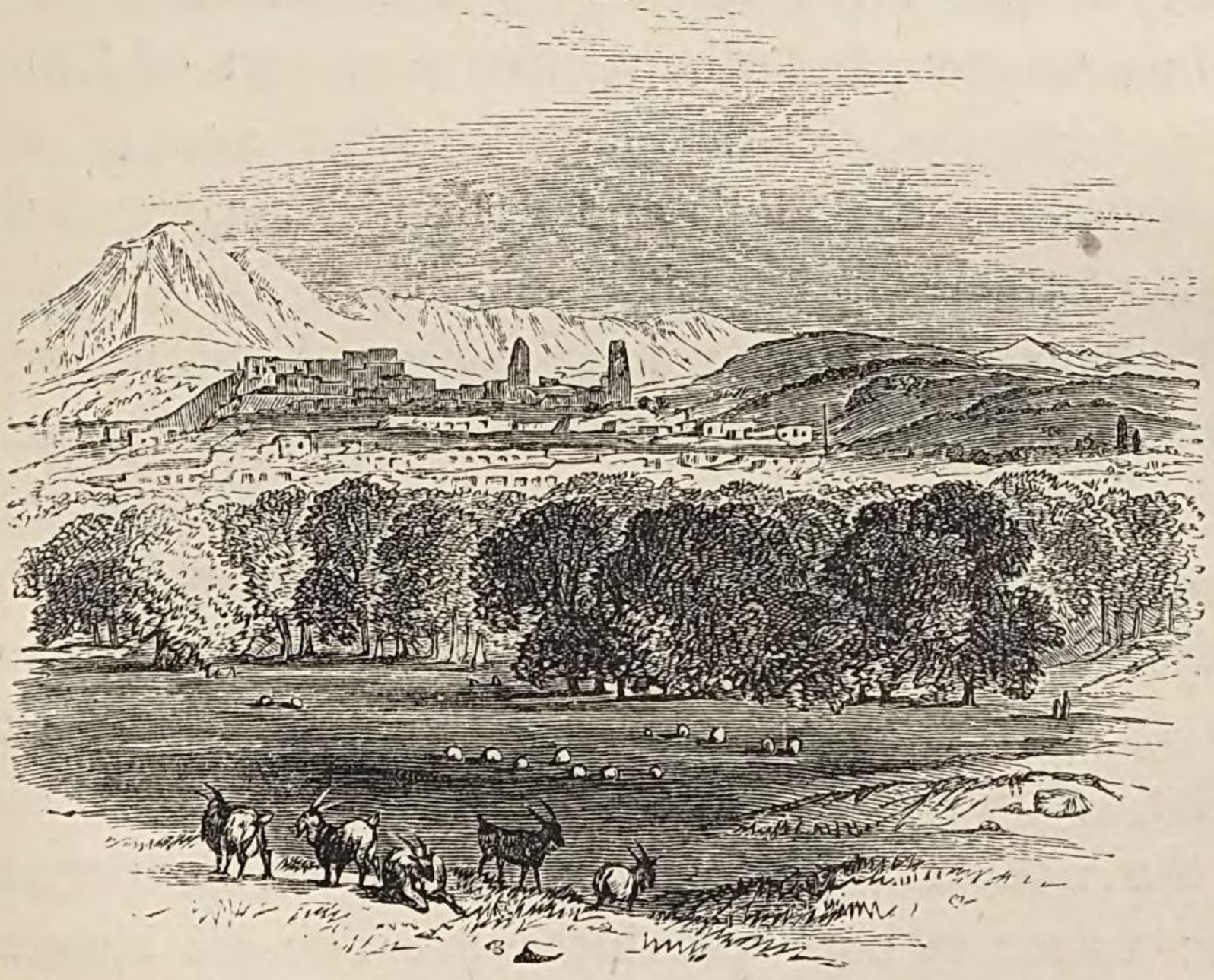
Vine culture, of which Prince Woronzof was the first promoter, has assumed such proportions in the Crimea of late years that the value of a desiatina of land, two acres and a half, has increased from 50 to 800 or 1,000 roubles; *i.e.*, from £7 to £114 or £143 sterling.

Theodosia, founded by Milesian Greeks 500 years B.C., was situated in a country so fertile that it gained the name of the granary of Greece. By a strange change of fortune it had utterly disappeared in the second century of the Christian era, and become ploughed fields. But in the 13th century, the Genoese having purchased the site, founded the new colony of Kaffa, and fortified it with formidable works of which some traces still remain. In the latter part of the 15th century, Kaffa was besieged by the Turks and the garrison surrendered at discretion; from that date until 1771 it remained under the government of a pasha, although the revenues were paid over to the Khan of the Crimea. The Russians bombarded and took it in 1771, and in 1787 changed its name to Theodosia; and, with a vandalism that has seldom been equalled, ruthlessly destroyed all the ancient monuments, Genoese, Turkish, and Tartar,

and reduced this historical town to a bathing-place; the most favoured, it is true, of the watering-places of the Crimea, and crowded from May to September.

Kertch, like Theodosia, passed from the hands of its founders the Greeks of Milesia, first, into the hands of the emperors of the East, then into the hands of the Tartars, then to the Turks, and ultimately to Russia. The Hill, called the Arm-Chair of Mithridates, recalls the fact that it was once subject to Mithridates, the sovereign of twenty-two nations; tradition states that Mithridates is buried here.

Kertch is now a town half Asiatic, half European, and in its population of 23,000 includes 3,000 Jews.



RUSSIAN SCENERY.

CHAPTER XV.

Western Russia—Little Russia—Podolia—Volhynia—White Russia — Moghilef — Minsk — Vitebsk — Black Russia — Grodno—Kovno—Wilna.

WESTERN RUSSIA, Russian Poland, and the government of Courland in the Baltic Provinces, formed the larger part of the kingdom of Poland previous to the first partition in 1772. Western Russia consists of the governments of Vitebsk, Moghilef, and Minsk, formerly called White Russia; of the governments of Wilna, Grodno, and Kovno, the west part of Lithuania, formerly called Black Russia; and of the governments of Podolia and Volhynia, a part of the region formerly called Little Russia.

Podolia, which was long governed by its own princes, was in 1569 united to Poland, and ranked as one of its most valuable provinces. It has a population of 1,946,000, of which 1,933,000 are estimated to be Poles. Volhynia, with a population of 1,704,000, mostly Little Russians, mixed with Poles, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, is also one of the richest agricultural provinces of the empire. The towns in both provinces are like all Russian provincial towns, with the same military and

official society, the same nobility of the second rank, and the same amusements. But the native Podolian and Volhynian avoids the towns and lives in the country, occupied with rural industries and pursuits.

A range of hills which rises in Volhynia, and traversing Podolia, reaches into the government of Kherson, is the watershed of the Bug and Dniester. It exercises a very beneficial influence on the aspect of the country, and produces an agreeable variety of upland and valleys, of wood and water. The scattered *chutors* here disappear, and are replaced by large villages with stately churches, standing in the midst of woods and gardens, and of far-stretching fields of wheat, and other grain; while the country-houses and domains of Russian and Polish merchants have an unmistakeable air of prosperity.

Podolia and parts of Volhynia have long been amongst the chief granaries of Europe; even when means of communication were more imperfect than at present great quantities of corn found their way thence to Odessa. The sheep farms of Podolia rival those of New Russia, and produce annually increasing quantities of fine wool; and herds of thousands of grey Podolian oxen make their way to Great Russia, to the Baltic provinces, and even to Germany. The trade is mostly in the hands of the Jews.

The population is mainly of the Greek Orthodox Church, but a few members of the Greek Uniat Church

still remain. In 1590 two Russian prelates, Cyril Tirletsky and Hypatius Potsi, entered into a compact with the Curia of Rome, by which they were admitted into communion with the Roman Church, with liberty to retain their national rite, and the marriage of the secular clergy, and to exclude the Filioque clause from the Creed. But on the first partition of Poland, between two and three millions of the Uniats returned to the Eastern Church; and again, in 1839, a further number, calculated at two millions, with their bishops, were received back into the Eastern Church; so that there remain now few Uniats, the total number in European Russia, including the Armenians, amounting only to 266,396.[1]

The provinces of Moghilef, Minsk, and Vitebsk are popularly known by the name of White Russia.

The soil of White Russia, though light and swampy, is far from unproductive, and yields corn, hemp, flax, peas, and pulse. The timber from the huge forests of the government of Minsk is floated down to Riga on the Dwina, and finds its way thence to England. The foliage of the trees, firs, oaks, limes, and maples, the wooded hills, green meadows, and wood-encompassed lakes, give the country a very picturesque aspect; but the climate is raw and damp, and exceedingly unhealthy.

[1] The "Statesman's Year-Book," p. 1880.

The peaceful, industrious, good tempered White Russians are descendants of the old Slav race of the Krevitchi, and in spite of the rule of the Poles, have to the present day preserved the dress, the speech, and many of the habits of their ancestors.

The name of "the land of the Krevitchi," by which White Russia was called in the eleventh century, died out on the rise of the Principalities of Polotsk, Misteslavsk, and Minsk, which belonged first to Kief, next to Lithuania, and later still to Poland. The 100 years' rule of the Poles in White Russia was not without its influence on a large number of the people. Polish habits and customs extended more or less over the country as the foreign element became dominant, the ownership of the land passed into the hands of the Polish nobles, and the Greek orthodox peasants became the serfs of masters belonging to the Greek Uniat and to the Roman Churches. However, in spite of this, large numbers of the White Russians clung steadfastly to their language and to their faith, and unions, termed "Right-believing Brotherhoods," were formed, and are now spread over the whole land. Roman Catholics are also numerous, and in the government of Vitebsk are said to form the larger part of the population. The present White Russians have inherited the anti-gregariousness of their forefathers; so that a village seldom contains more than twenty

houses, and sometimes only three or four. Considering the ample supply of wood which is available, it is strange to see how little care the peasants bestow on their habitations. They are small and gloomy; and, like other Russian *Izbas*, contain only two rooms, one warm and the other cold. They equal, in dirt and wretchedness, the worst of the out-of-the-way Great Russian villages; glass windows are rare luxuries, light is admitted through small apertures, which are closed by means of boards; and the bare wooden walls are black with smoke and soot. In spring and autumn the mud-covered floor becomes a puddle; whilst in winter calves, lambs, and poultry take their places round the family hearth, and hens and geese nestle under the benches.

The White Russians are of medium height, and have flaxen hair. As the habits of the people are so filthy, it is not surprising that the *Plica Polonica*, the worst of the diseases of the hair and head, is common amongst them; its prevalence is, however, ordinarily ascribed to the dampness of the climate.

Moghilef is behind almost all the other Governments of the Empire in manufactures; but produces corn and grain to an amount considerably above the demands of the population; and timbers and masts from the extensive forests with which it is covered, are floated down the rivers to the Black Sea in great numbers. Minsk, one of the poorest and least culti-

vated provinces of the Empire, trades to a small extent in corn, but mostly in timber; which is conveyed by the rivers on the opposite sides of the watershed southwards to Kherson, and northwards to Riga and Königsberg. In Vitebsk there is a small trade in corn, hemp, flax, and timber, as well as in horses and sheep of inferior breeds; but the trade is chiefly in the hands of Jews, and the peasantry are little advantaged by it. Long serfdom under Polish masters, and the mischievous influence of Jewish pedlers and usurers, who rob them systematically, have made the peasants indolent and indifferent, and reduced them to a wretched condition. Brandy is their great consolation, the one friend which enables them for a while to forget the utter hopelessness of their lot; and this they obtain from the Jews in exchange for the produce of their land. The emancipation of the serfs, and the connection of these districts by railways with St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Riga, give ground for hope that a brighter day has dawned on these White Russians; and that, under more civilizing influences, their characters will be changed and their condition improved.

Moghilef and Vitebsk formed part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; of which the other parts, now under Russian rule, Grodno, Kovno, and Wilna, constitute Black Russia. Grodno produces seventeen millions of bushels of rye annually, of which

one-third is exported. The pastures are good ; sheep are kept in large numbers, and wool is an article of commerce ; and timber is cut in its extensive forests, of which Bialoreja covers no less than 875 square miles. The forest glades recall the scenery of the wilder portions of an English park; and the limes when in flower afford a rich harvest to the bees, which are largely kept and supply honey of the finest quality. The swampy parts are the haunts of wild pigs, and of the comparatively few bisons (*Bos Europæus*) which have survived the slaughter of the last Polish insurrection. Kovno has a large trade in corn ; and Wilna produces corn, timber, and honey, and the skins of elks, bears, wolves, foxes, martins, and squirrels.[1] But the trade is mainly in the hands of the Jews, who form a considerable portion of the population in the villages and towns.

The population of Lithuania is descended mainly from the Imoud and Lithuanian tribes ; and, though nominally Christian, retains many old heathen customs and superstitions. Some, connected with the last moments of the dying, are very singular. All seed corn is removed from the house, under the belief that if it were there when the soul left the body it would never grow ; and a hole is pierced in the wall above the sick man's head to give passage

[1] Keith Johnston's "General Gazetteer."

to his parting soul. The ordinary salutation is, "Jesus Christ be praised;" to which answer is made, "For ever and ever. Amen."

The houses, built of wood, thatched with straw, seldom provided with chimneys, and seldomer still with glazed windows, are mostly squalid and dirty; but peasants of the better class pride themselves on having a special guest-chamber, furnished with a clean bed, and adorned with numerous pictures of saints, among whom St. George, the Patron of Agriculture, occupies the place of honour.

In the government of Kovno, especially, are very commonly found impoverished nobles, who occupy houses that differ from the houses of the peasantry only in size and in possessing an orchard or garden, and who yet retain in the midst of wretched poverty all their pride of birth.

Gipsies also abound; but are obliged by law to have fixed residences. Though they are baptized, and observe a few Church rules, they practise many old Pagan ceremonies. They maintain themselves and their usually large families, the men by tinkering, horse-doctoring, horse-dealing, and, not unfrequently, horse-stealing; the women by telling fortunes. Another favourite occupation is the taming and training of performing bears, more especially near the little town of Smorgoni, which is nick-named "The Bears' Academy." The visit of "Mischka," a

diminutive of Michael, as the bear is called, is welcomed by the peasants as an advent of good luck, especially by those afflicted with rheumatic pains, who allow him to dance on their recumbent bodies, and consider his shampooing to be a perfect cure.

RUSSIAN PEASANTS.

CHAPTER XVI.

GRAND DUCHY OF POLAND.

Poland—Lithuania—The Jagellons—Insurrections—Population—Produce—Railways—Roads—Government Schools—Religion—Inhabitants—Easter—Harvest Home—Character of People—Villages—Towns—Jews—Nobility—Polish Men—Women—Warsaw—University—Literature.

THE kingdom of Poland, before its partition among Austria, Prussia, and Russia, consisted of Poland proper and of the grand duchies of Lithuania and Courland, and was divided into three provinces, Great and Little Poland and Lithuania. According to the old fables, Lekh, the founder of the Polish nation, discovered at Gniesen a white eagle's nest, and built a castle on the spot; at the same time his brother Tchekh settled himself in Bohemia. In the latter part of the tenth century, Micilas, King of Poland, was accepted by the Princess Dombrowska as her husband, on condition that he and his people should become Christians; and he built the cathedral at Gniesen, which was consecrated and ruled over by St. Adalbert. In 1139 Bolislaus divided the kingdom between his four sons, and thus was the means of introducing into it a series of civil wars,

which were finally put an end to in 1296, when the four dominions were once more united under one sovereign. Casimir the Great, who died childless in 1370, proposed to his nobles a scheme to make Louis, King of Hungary, his heir. They agreed on certain conditions, which Louis, on accepting the throne, bound himself to abide by. This was the precedent of the *pacta conventa*, which became the ruin of Poland. It bound every sovereign on ascending the throne to observe certain covenants; and was not merely a sign of mistrust, but the means of increasing the power and privileges of the nobility and clergy. The constant disturbances and feuds consequent on a virtually elective crown, and the frequent changes from monarchical to what were really republican institutions, rent asunder, and finally destroyed the kingdom. One voice, pronouncing the notorious veto, "Ne posowolgave," "I do not allow it," was sufficient to render barren and inoperative the most weighty decision of the deliberative assembly.

On the death of Louis, his daughter, Hedwiga, who had succeeded to the throne, was married to Jagellon, the Grand Duke of Lithuania; and thus the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became united to Poland. The Orthodox Greek Church had attempted, but with no very great success, the conversion of the Lithuanians to Christianity; and owing "to the manner of conversion adopted by the Knights of the

Teutonic Order, who, though professing Christianity, really carried fire and sword wherever they went,"[1] the natives preferred their old heathen superstitions. But on the marriage of Hedwiga with Jagellon the conversion was effected most peaceably, and in the most summary manner. "They were divided into groups, and the priest then sprinkled them with holy water, pronouncing, as he did so, a name of the Latin Calendar. To one group he gave the name of Peter, to another Paul, to another John."[2] This intrusion of the Latins into a district already in a measure occupied by the Orthodox Greek Church, added, to those already at work, a fresh cause of dissension.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century the Jagellons died out, and the extinction of that family was the first step in the decadence of Poland. Though heroic names, such as that of John Sobieski, occur in its history, the limitations of the regal power and the feuds of the nobility, not to mention the bribing of the electors, and the intolerance of the priests, brought about the partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795. These put an end to the disturbances, by putting an end to the liberty of the country; and four-fifths of the Polish nation were thus brought under Russian rule.

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[1] "Polish Experiences," by W. H. Bullock, p. 256.

[2] Rambaud, vol. i., p. 187.

By Napoleon I. Prussian Poland was formed into the Duchy of Warsaw, and made subject to the King of Saxony. After Napoleon's fall, Kulm and Michelaw were restored to Prussia; Tarnopol and the left bank of the Vistula were made over to Austria; and the remaining districts were formed into the kingdom of Poland; which, though constituting an integral part of the Russian empire, possessed a separate administration, and received, in November, 1815, a special constitution, greatly favouring the nobility, at the expense of the burgher and peasant classes.

The kingdom, comprising an area of 52,700 square miles, and a population of, 3,500,000, was governed by a Viceroy in the Tsar's name, and supplied an army of 50,000 men, of which the Archduke Constantine was the commander in chief.

On the 29th of November, 1830, an insurrection broke out in Russian Poland. The successes at first obtained by the insurgents increased the general enthusiasm, and even sober-minded men joined their ranks. General Chlopitzki was made Generalissimo and Dictator, and the Polish regiments stationed in Warsaw went over to the insurgents. Thereupon Marshal Diebitch crossed the frontier and defeated the Poles in an engagement at Grochov on February 25th, 1831. Chlopitzki, having been severely wounded, laid down his command, and was succeeded by

Sterzynetzki, who, in spite of the cholera which was raging in both armies, brought up the strength of the Polish force to 68,000 infantry, 13,500 cavalry, and 745 pieces of artillery, and organized besides a free corps of 500 men. The contest was waged with varying fortunes under successive Russian generals till, on November 8th, 1831, the victorious Russian army re-entered Warsaw.

In 1846 another insurrection broke out in Posen and Galicia, which ended in the incorporation of the former republic of Cracow into the Austrian empire.

In 1861, in the midst of the reform agitation which accompanied the liberation of the serfs, another outbreak occurred in Poland, and among the chief instigators to insurrection were many devout Polish ladies. The recruiting operations in 1863 gave the signal for another open insurrection; and a secret provisional government was constituted which called upon the people to take arms, issued orders, and raised subsidies.

Bands of fugitives from the conscription assembled in the woods under the command of some young noblemen, the most celebrated of whom were the Frenchman Rochebrune and the Pole Langiewicz, and surprised the Russian troops at various points; numbers of Polish officers forsook the Russian service and joined the insurgents' ranks, and Mierolawski became Dictator. Under the iron rule of Generals Berg and

Muravief, Poland and Lithuania were in time reduced to order, and numbers of persons of all classes atoned for their rashness by death, exile, or imprisonment. Since this last outbreak, Poland has been made a Russian province, and the "Finis Poloniæ" is an accomplished fact.

The population of Poland in 1872 was 6,528,017,[1] and the area 49,000 square miles. The country is a plain, sloping generally towards the Baltic, well watered by the rivers Vistula, Wierprz, Bug, Narew, Pilitza, Niemen, and Warta, that are all more or less navigable, and by many small streams. In the north-east and west it abounds in lakes and large marshes, and boasts throughout of extensive forests. Nearly half the entire area is under cultivation; of which one-third is devoted to the production of rye, the remainder to barley, oats, hemp, peas, potatoes, and wheat, of which the Dantzig white is largely exported. The forests cover an area of 2,400 square miles, and produce oak, elm, sycamore, birch, pine, maple, ash, horse-chestnut, and firs, and give shelter to the bison, *Bos Europæus*, formerly common in Central Europe. The exports in 1873, of which wood and timber, rye and wheat were the chief, were estimated at £12,000,000, in round numbers, and the imports, the chief of which were raw cotton and metals, amounted

[1] "Almanach de Gotha."

to £14,000,000. Nearly all the commerce is in the hands of the Jews, who number in the kingdom 783,000; and the manufactures, which are considerable, are in the hands of the Germans, who are estimated at 290,000; the remainder of the population includes 3,700,000 Poles, 290,000 Lithuanians, and 640,000 Russians.

A system of railways connects Warsaw with St. Petersburg, Dantzig and Konigsberg, and other parts of the Baltic; and with Odessa on the Black Sea, and Galatz on the Danube.

The high roads are few in number, not exceeding in their entire length 2,700 miles;[1] on some of which coaches run; and on others, carts without springs, called *britshkas*. The inns are wretched; and were it not for the unbounded hospitality of the Polish gentry, the traveller would frequently be in great straits. In railway travelling it is advisable to make the journey either in the first class, or during the interval between Friday and Saturday evening, so as to avoid the odour which is a distinguishing characteristic of the Polish Jew.

The kingdom of Poland is divided into ten governments or provinces, which are governed as nearly as possible in the same manner as the Provinces of Russia Proper, under a Governor-General, who is

[1] "Murray's Handbook," p. 434.

responsible for the management of the whole kingdom. The governments are subdivided into rural communes; over which is the *Voit*, or Mayor, elected by the peasants, who alone have the right of suffrage, to the exclusion of the landowners and priests. The Code Napoleon is at present the law of the kingdom; and the proceedings in court, both in civil and criminal cases, are oral and public.

Since the rebellion of 1863, 64, the permission to practise a profession, and even to open a shop, or to buy land, is refused to all Poles who will not take an oath to embrace the Russian Orthodox Faith.[1] The schools are carried on as in Russia Proper, but with greater strictness of supervision; even the private schools being subject to the inspection of the Government. The teaching of the Russian language is rigidly enforced in all the primary schools; the teaching of Polish is as rigidly prohibited; and with the view of ultimately abolishing that language it is made penal to use it in commercial transactions, and even in churches, and in the publication of newspapers and books. It is needless to say that the Press is under severe censorship; and that such journals and works only are allowed to circulate, as have the imprimatur of the Government.

The Roman Catholic Church holds sway over

[1] "The Russians of To-day," p. 158.

four-fifths of the population. The other fifth is made up of Uniats, members of the Russo-Greek Church, Sectarians, Starovni or Russian sectaries who emigrated into Poland in the thirteenth century and formed separate colonies, Jews, and Mahometans.

The Crown lands comprise nearly a third part of the kingdom. Some of the estates of the chief nobility are of very great extent, varying from 5,000 to 40,000 acres each. "Agriculture is pursued on more than 25,000 large farms, of the extent of 200 to 1,500 acres, belonging to nearly 8,000 landed proprietors; and on more than 240,000 peasant farms, seldom exceeding forty acres of land. The peasants produce almost nothing for exportation. Large proprietors generally work their own farms, and very rarely let them. The rent of a farm seldom exceeds ten shillings per acre.[1]"

The inhabitants of different parts of the kingdom differ in appearance as well as in moral qualities and pursuits. The Masures inhabiting a part of the government of Polotz, are a courageous, pleasure-loving, but religious race, remarkable for their tall stature, and of a careless, easy disposition, which leads them to confine their efforts to doing only that which is absolutely necessary for existence. Their

[1] "Murray's Handbook."

favourite amusement is dancing, and the mazurka, so well-known throughout Europe, is only danced in its perfection by these Poles.

The Kracowäks, established on the spurs that run down from the Carpathians, and the Sandomires are distinguished from the other Poles by their dark hair, fresh complexions, and clean shaven faces, and are famed for the excellence of their language and speech. Their Sunday garb is peculiar: a square red or dark coloured cap, known by the name of konfoderatka, trimmed in winter with sheep-skin, and in summer with ribands and feathers; a white shirt, over which is worn a blue, brown, or white kaftan, with a stand-up collar; and a waist-belt covered with buttons, rings, and other ornaments. Both men and women wear boots, with high iron-bound heels. They, too, are fond of dancing, and are specially addicted to their national Krakoviaka.

The Podljaks are a mixture of Poles and White Russians. The Kurpiks who are a mixture of Masures and Jiatwiags are excellent shots; and it is said, that when King Stanislaus Augustus visited Plotzk, Augustow, a Kurpik marskman, wrote the letters S. A. R., Stanislaus Augustus Rex, in bullet marks at a distance of 400 paces.

In the kingdom of Poland, as well as in the provinces that are formed out of the old Duchy of Lithuania, it is the custom of all Roman Catholic peasants to

greet the passer-by with "Niech bçdzie pochwalone Jesus Christus," "The name of Jesus Christ be praised," to which the person greeted replies "Na vieki viekow," "For ever and ever." During the festivities of Easter the Poles give themselves up to feasting, and to visiting friends, neighbours, and acquaintances for this purpose. The long table, extending the whole length of the dining-room, groans under the weight of provisions. Against the wall are propped up marvels of confectionery, sometimes to the height of three feet. The centre of the table is occupied by great hams of wild boar, or bear, and by a variety of other cold dishes. Hungarian wine and champagne are the most popular beverages. Every guest must taste something, even if it be no more than a morsel of the hard-boiled egg, which the hostess offers to each guest on his arrival, after having eaten a crumb of it herself; and must drink a thimbleful of wine or brandy; to refuse would be a mortal offence to the hostess and to her Svenzone, Easter-table.

In the district of Sandomir the harvest rejoicings have some curious peculiarities. When the corn is ripe, the girl of highest character in the village is crowned with a wreath of corn and coloured ribands, and conducted to church amid much ringing of bells. After the saying of Mass the crown is solemnly blessed by the priest, the chief man

of the village fastens *a live cock on to the top of it*, and the procession sets forth to the castle of the Lord of the Manor. Meanwhile all eyes are fixed on the cock, on whose behaviour at this juncture much depends. If he screams, or picks at the ears of corn, there is general rejoicing, for an abundant yield may be expected. If, on the other hand, he remains quiescent, a bad harvest is sure to ensue, or the Lord of the Manor will prove out of temper. The train having reached the castle, he is requested graciously to accept the crown; and a song is sung wishing him much profit from the harvest, and further expressing the opinion that the exertions of the peasantry have deserved a roasted ox, a calf, a sheep, a goose, a duck, a cock, some beer, and some brandy. As soon as the song is finished one of the peasants makes a speech, and the Lady of the Manor takes the crown off the head of the girl, and gives her, in return, a present of money. After the feast dancing begins, the Lord of the Manor opening the ball with the heroine of the day, and the Lady with the peasant who has been chosen to make the speech.

As long as Poland was an independent kingdom the peasantry possessed no rights whatever; but were mere slaves, to be disposed of according to the will or fancy of the nobles. As the word "Cheop," fellow, was not sufficiently low to be applied by the proud Polish noble to his peasants; he gave them the

appellation of Cham, or Ham, after the outcast son of Noah. Their position was even worse than that of the Russian serfs, whose relations, with the generally good-natured Russian Lord, partook of a somewhat patriarchal character. At the time of the partition of the kingdom they were ignorant, indolent, drunken, improvident, and in the lowest state of degradation.

The abolition of serfdom was first effected in 1807 by the constitution of Napoleon the first. But as the peasants remained without any proprietorship in the soil, freedom did little to alter their state of dependence; and it was not until February 19th, 1864, that the Polish peasants became first really independent, and possessed of landed property.

They are a fine race, strongly-built, tall, active, and well formed. "At the bottom," says Mr. Bullock,[1] "the Polish peasant is a good-natured fellow, but he has been so deliberately corrupted by the Government, and debauched by the facilities which the Jews afford him of getting intoxicated, that he has little left of his original good nature." Long continued oppression has made him cringing and servile in the presence of his superiors; but behind their backs he will speak of these same superiors, with democratic freedom of speech, as thieves, and dogs, and brutes. He deports himself with no more real reverence towards the

[1] "Polish Experiences," p. 105.

clergy; on spiritual matters, indeed, he hazards no opinion; they are too high and holy for his understanding, so he listens and obeys; but in worldly matters, he claims to know as much as the priests, upon whom, if he feels himself aggrieved, he calls down the most fearful imprecations, and hurls the most virulent abuse, but only when their backs are turned.

A Polish village consists of cottages, one storey high, built round an oval space, to which there is but one exit; and, at the upper end of which, the landowner's house, with barns and other farm buildings is generally situated.

The smaller Polish towns have grown out of the villages founded by the German settlers, who, in the first half of the fifteenth century, penetrated as far as Podlachia and West Lithuania; and the population is a mixture of Polish and German, the Germans oftentimes preponderating. So much so was this the case in Krakaw, that all official papers were written in German or Latin until the year 1583, when Polish was used for the first time. Even to the present day the town population bears traces of its German origin; the tradesmen and merchants speaking German, the guilds, with their laws and rules of labour, being German in their constitution, and the comparatively few Burghers of pure Polish descent, preferring agriculture to trade. These latter differ, indeed, very

little from the peasants, whose indolence they share, caring little for exercise, and spending their leisure time upon some bench or heap of stones, and telling or hearing some long-spun tale.

The houses in a country town are of one storey and roofed with straw, shingles, or tiles; they are built in streets which lead to a central market-place, Rynek Ring, in the centre of which stands a town-hall, either perfect or in ruins. A country town, according to Mr. Bullock, "may be compared to a bloated spider, of which the body will represent the Rynek Ring and the legs the straggling streets leading up to it."[1] If Poles and Germans preponderate, the towns are comparatively clean; but if Jews have the upper hand, greater filthiness than they present cannot be conceived.

Up to the time of the death of Sigismond Augustus, the last of the Jagellons, there was far more religious toleration in Poland than in any country in Europe; and the Jews, availing themselves of this, settled here in large numbers. In most countries the Jews have more or less assumed the garb, manners, and habits of the land of their adoption; but in Poland they have preserved their national peculiarities unimpaired; and form a glaring contrast to the native population. They have almost entirely monopolized the trade of

[1] "Polish Experiences," p. 105.

the country; and the whole commercial wealth is in their hands. Cheating the tax-gatherers, and grinding down the peasantry, and even many of the magnates with usurious interest, they have "fastened like leeches on the people but for whose generous hospitality they must have been driven out of Europe, and continue to suck the life-blood out of them."[1]

The Polish Jew, with his piercing black eyes, strongly-marked, regular features, sallow complexion, and either black or reddish hair, is in every respect a typical representative of his race. The women, in spite of their squalour—for one is seldom met with whose clothes are not a mass of rags—are sometimes strikingly beautiful; and have such a passion for ornament that even the most hideous old crone will decorate her filthy tatters with a large gold necklace and wear most valuable diamond or pearl earrings. As soon as a girl is married, her beautiful blue-black hair is mercilessly shaved off and replaced by a wig, on which is superimposed a frightful jewel-decked cap.

The men are forbidden by Government to wear their forelocks; but they have kept to their long, shining caftans, and to their high boots.

It is only an eye-witness who can understand the possibility of human beings being packed so closely together as the Jews are in their dwellings, and these

[1] "Polish Experiences," p. 138.

are quite as filthy as their clothes and their persons. Epidemics and forms of suffering more horrible than can elsewhere be seen are, in consequence, frequent among them. One crying evil has been put down of late years, the early marriage of boys and girls, which used sometimes to take place at the age of ten or twelve. So great is the cunning of these Polish Jews in evading the inquiries of the census officers, that no accurate statistics can be obtained of their numbers either in the villages or towns. Though they have the supreme control of all commercial transactions, they are not as yet freed from those civil and political disabilities originally imposed on them by the Governments of all the countries of Europe in which they settled.

In Poland the possession of the smallest freehold estate, or the proof that such an estate had been in the possession of his ancestors in the time of the old Kingdom, constituted a man a noble, or a gentleman —the titles being synonymous—provided he had not engaged in a manufacture or trade. Titles, such as Count or Prince, added nothing to the dignity; for, as gentry, all were equal.

The grandees Radzewil, Sapieta, Czartoriski, and others, had in their service troops of vassals, and even poor noblemen, who went to battle and often lost their lives in their lord's service. Their households were organized on an almost royal footing. The Marshals, who superintend the household,

the doctor, the lawyer, the keeper of the keys, the bailiff, the butler, and, lastly, the fools, all lived at the cost of the subject burghers and villagers; who, in return for the privilege of cultivating a few acres, were bound to supply their chief with bread, meal, fish, and flesh. In addition to these household officials, the castle swarmed with Heyducs, Cossacks, servants, and boys, who served for small wages, often most irregularly paid. The extent of the wealth of these Polish magnates may be judged from the fact that Prince Czartoryski in old times contributed to the army 20,000 men, and Count Zamoyski 10,000.[1]

As the qualification for nobility is so small, it is not surprising that there are at present in Poland not less than 283,420 nobles or gentlemen. But they no longer live as of old. The richer ones occupy huge chateaux, which too frequently present a ruined appearance on the outside; those of lesser incomes live in smaller country houses amid their peasantry: and all exercise unbounded hospitality towards their dependents and strangers who may happen to visit them. Mr. Bullock speaks of the good-humoured cordiality with which he was received even at midnight; and of their art "of possessing themselves in quietness in their own homes," which reminded him forcibly of English domestic life. "I

[1] McCulloch's "Geographical Dictionary."

know of no country where the children pass so much of the day with their parents. Except the children are very young they invariably dine at the same table, the whole family as a rule dining early. The practice of sitting below the salt is observed. The long table, with its descending scale of guests, reminds one of the descriptions of the dinners in old Saxon times in England. At the head will sit the master and mistress, surrounded by any strangers who may be staying in the house, or invited to dinner. Next below sit the chaplain and librarian ; and below them again the children, with their tutors and governesses."[1]

But though the exterior of the houses of the gentry may be shabby, the inside is cleanly and comfortable, and the vast farm-buildings, consisting of barns for the corn, which is never stacked, of sheep and cow-sheds of large proportion, and not unfrequently of distilleries are, as a rule, in excellent repair.

The following is the character given years ago by a Pole of his countrymen: "A dread and dislike of all, and more especially of intellectual, labour, requiring sustained exertion and continuous application, pervades all grades of the nobility. None but the higher classes can be induced to take a pen in hand; and reading is found almost equally irksome.

[1] "Polish Experiences," p. 38.

To read one must sit still, and the Pole requires constant motion. The frivolous idleness that keeps him ever 'on the go,' leads him into all sorts of luxury and dissipation. From the same causes arise the changeableness and levity which wean the Pole from the most sacred of causes. Incapable of persevering to the end in any undertaking, he leaves one thing and wants incontinently to begin another; like a child who throws an old toy into the corner at the sight of a new one."

How true soever this description may have been in the days when it was written, it must be modified now. In the first place, it is no longer considered degrading for a poor gentleman to engage in business or trade. Mr. Bullock quotes as instances of the business habits and qualifications of the gentry the *Crédit Foncier* and the Agricultural Society of the Kingdom of Poland, which attained such success as alarmed the Russian Government and led it to suppress the Society, and also induced the Prussian Government to start a Landschaft of its own in lieu of the Crédit Foncier of Posen, which it closed. He describes the Polish gentry "as combining happily some of the best points of the French and English character; borrowing grace and vivacity from the French, and grafting them on to English sincerity." "That the Poles are still wanting in that *solidarité* which is supposed to characterize us Englishmen, is to be

regretted in a political point of view; but solidarity is a quality which is the better for being kept well in the background in a *salon* or at the dinner table."[1] Of the Polish women, who have exercised such a powerful influence in the later revolutions, he says:[2] "They are not precisely charming, like French women, or fascinating like the women of Spain or Italy; but there is an indefinable something about them which renders them irresistibly interesting. Their eyes beam with a double faith; a faith in the future of their country, and a faith in the better life which shall make up for their sufferings here. It is this constant habit of looking forward which distinguishes Polish women from those of any other nation. You can see that they believe they have a mission to fulfil, and make it the business of their lives to fulfil it." This description is in the main confirmed by the author of "The Russians of To-day": "The Poles are naturally a quick-witted people, genial and sensitive. The women are proverbially beautiful and sweet-tempered, but they are endowed with a courage which used to make the iron-handed Count Berg say that a Polish woman and a priest together could checkmate any police office."[3]

The suspicion with which the Russian Government regards its Polish subjects, has led to the adoption of

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[1] "Polish Experiences," p. 36. [2] Ibid., p. 38.
[3] "Russians of To-day," p. 158.

the most stringent measures at the custom-houses on the frontiers. All books, journals, and reviews are contraband, and are ruthlessly seized; and if a traveller, ignorant of the regulation, has wrapped up his clothes or boots in old newspaper, he runs the risk of being delayed and examined by the police.

Warsaw stands on the brow of a cliff on the left bank of the muddy-yellow Vistula, and contains 302,475 inhabitants. Founded in the 12th century, it was made the capital of the kingdom in 1566, when the Polish Diet was removed to it from Cracow, which had been the residence of the sovereign. On the right bank of the Vistula, and connected with the old city by a bridge, is the suburb of Praga, once very extensive, but now almost deserted except by Jews, from it one of the finest views of Warsaw is to be obtained. To the right stands the citadel, in the centre are the old portions of the town, to the left is seen the old castle Żamek Ujaz, from which a long avenue of limes and poplars leads to the public gardens and promenades of the Belvedere, and to the imperial villa of Lazienski; below, in the Vistula, lies the island of Süch, with its willows and poplars. Above the mass of buildings rise the Gothic towers of the old cathedral, the cupolas of the Church of the Holy Cross, the Lutheran Church, and the picturesque old castle, with its terraces and hanging gardens, which was commenced by the Duke of Mazovia, was

in later times the palace of the Polish kings, and subsequently the residence of the Russian Governor with his staff of officials. The old town is a labyrinth of narrow, dark, crooked, badly paved and dirty streets; in which fine palaces and mansions and mean, ill-constructed houses of wood stand side by side. In the Market Place, which has best preserved the old character of its buildings, are some narrow, tall, three-windowed houses, adorned with the coats of arms of their former owners, emblems of trade guilds, Roman Catholic mottoes, and bas-reliefs of angels and saints. In the new town the buildings are mostly of stone, the use of wood being now prohibited. Amongst the many monuments which stand in the squares commemorating the great ones of the Polish nation, is the statue of Copernicus, the Pole, seated in academic garb, and holding in one hand a globe and in the other a pair of compasses, with a simple inscription in Polish and Latin, "To Nicholas Kopernikas, his fellow-citizens." And as these statues give expression to the national feeling, so do the statues of saints at the corners of the streets and in the front of the churches, decked with flowers, and with lamps burning before them, evidence the religious character of the Poles.

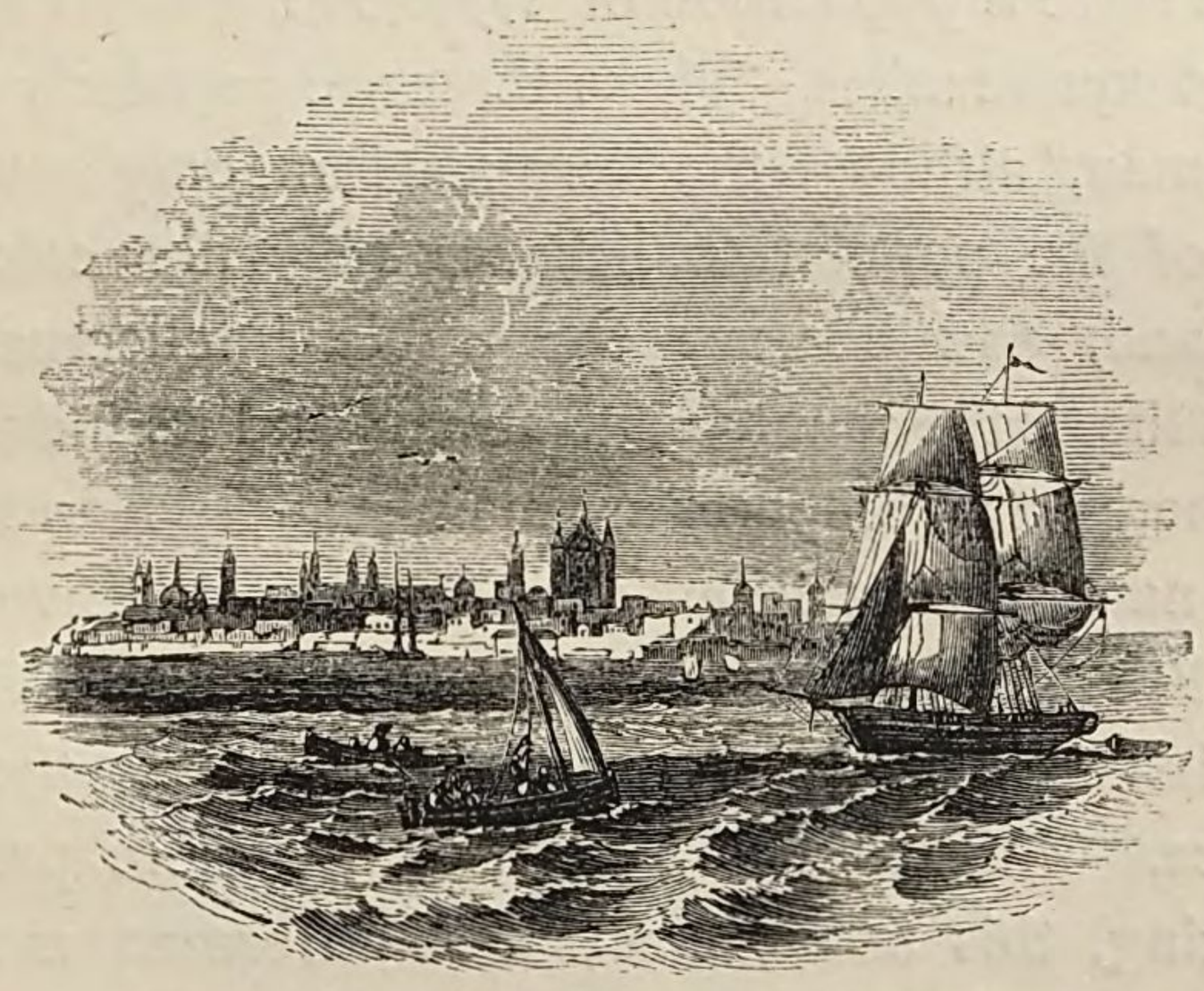
The inhabitants of Warsaw are fond of amusement, and as partial to living in the open air as the Parisians. The cafés and restaurants are always crowded, not

only with men but with women and priests. In the summer, leaving the park of Lazienski to the Russians, the Polish inhabitants throng the Süchs and Kiasinsk Gardens, wandering in the shady alleys, dressed in the sable garments which, as in mourning for their own country, they uniformly wear. In the town and in its neighbourhood are a number of small gardens, called Dreedki, where two or three musicians suffice to attract a chattering, laughing crowd. The innate politeness which characterizes the nation extends to the lowest classes, and a rough or coarse word is seldom heard. But as remarkable as the politeness are the mud and dirt, called by Napoleon the fifth element of the country, which reign supreme.

The University of Warsaw was suppressed in 1863, and its fine library of books and manuscripts was carried away to St. Petersburg. In its place the Government has established two Colleges, in addition to the Gymnasia and primary schools; and the Russian Catholics and Jews have each a seminary.

Poland has an ancient literature, but it is mostly in the Latin language, which its old historians and more than one of its poets have preferred to their own. The poets, novelists, and even the historians of the present time write mostly of the slavery and the woes of their country; those who can read the language speak highly of the genius and beauty that

shines in their works. The poet Mickiewicz, and Krasinski, the poet preacher or seer, as Mr. Bullock terms him, hold the highest place in the estimation of their countrymen. "In reading Krasinski you would rather suppose you had before you the utterances of a Jeremiah or of a Dante, than of a poet produced by, or rather in spite of, the nineteenth century. Krasinski's highest aspiration is the moral education of his countrymen; and the constant aim of his poems is to teach them to make nothing of their present sufferings in comparison of the glorious recompense in store for them; a deep religious colouring pervades his poems."[1]



TCHERKASK.

[1] "Polish Experiences," p. 344.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BALTIC PROVINCES.

The Letts and Esths—History—Wars—Revel—Customs—Riga—Mittau.

THE Baltic provinces include the province of St. Petersburg, with an area of 20,759 square miles, and a population of 1,325,000 inhabitants; and the Russo-German provinces of Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland, which have a population of 1,940,000, and an area of 36,510 square miles. These three are popularly called "German," although the Germans form only one-sixth part of the population, because they first colonized the land, and because the whole intellectual and social life of the country is German, and its industries, commerce, and property are mainly in German hands. The native population, the Esthonians, Livonians, and Poles, far outnumber the German inhabitants, and have remained all but impervious to their influence. This want of receptivity, or more properly speaking, this antagonism to all German manners and culture, is to be attributed chiefly to the peculiar relations subsisting for centuries between the governing German caste and the native population, which,

though differing widely in character and in blood, were united in hating and mistrusting their task-masters, and with them everything German.

Courland takes its name from the *Korses*, who settled on the western shore of the Gulf of Riga and the Baltic. "From the Letgols, who also settled here, are descended the Letts, or Latiches, of south Livonia. The Livonians on the Gulfs of Livonia and Finland, and the Tchoud-Esthonians, who gave their name to Peïpus, the *The Lake of the Tchoudes*, belong to the Finnish race. They are the ancestors of the present inhabitants of Northern Livonia and Esthonia. The three so-called German provinces of the Baltic are then Lettish in the north and Finnish in the south."[1]

These provinces were almost unknown to the rest of Europe up to 1000 A.D. Yaroslaf I., a son of Vladimir the Great, penetrated into Esthonia, imposed a tribute on the native tribes, built sundry castles, and laid the foundations of Dorpat (1030) which he named Yurief. About fifty years later the coasts of Esthonia were colonized by the Danes under King Eric, and the town of Revel was founded by his successor, Valdemar II. More important still for the future of the country was the first appearance of the Germans on the coasts of Livonia, said to have been accidentally brought about, in 1158, by the

[1] Rambaud, translated by Mrs. Laing, vol. v., p. 25.

shipwreck of a Bremen trading vessel at the mouth of the Düna. Traders from Lubeck and other sea-ports soon found their way to the newly-discovered country, entered into trade relations with the Livonians, and erected a fortified goods' store, which developed later into the town of Nexküll; and before long the new-comers had managed to reduce the natives to a state of vassalage. The Churchmen speedily followed in the traders' wake. In 1190 the Augustinian monk Meinhard founded a church and a monastery, and obtained permission from Vladimir, Prince of Polotsk, to preach Christianity to the heathen Lettishes on the Düna. From these peaceful beginnings arose a power dangerous to its immediate neighbours, and even to Russia.

Meinhardt was the first bishop of Livonia. The fourth bishop, the astute Albert, founded Riga in 1200, and managed so to ingratiate himself with Prince Vladimir, as to persuade him that the conversion of the heathen was the sole aim and object of his ambition. In the meantime, however, he continued to erect new fortresses and to reinforce his army; and in 1206 founded the order of the Brothers of the Army of Christ, or the Brethren of the Sword, who received from Pope Innocent III. the statutes of the Knights Templars, a white mantle with the red cross on the shoulders, and the badge of a cross and a sword.

By fair means or foul, the natives of the soil were made to receive the sacrament of baptism, and were at the same time reduced to a condition of serfdom, their lands being divided between the knights, the churches, and the monasteries. After a time, Vladimir began to entertain suspicions as to the real aim of the German churchman's exertions in promoting the spread of Christianity, and issued his command, as supreme lord of the land, forbidding all further proselytism. The command being disregarded, both sides flew to arms, and Bishop Albert succeeded in driving the Russians from their fortified castle, Konenois on the Düna, and subdued the greater part of Livonia, of which he made over one-third to the knights.

The Livonians, with the submissiveness native to their race, for a time patiently endured the yoke of their German masters; but at last driven to desperation by their ruthless oppressors they rose in rebellion in 1237, and utterly defeated the Brethren of the Sword, under their master Volquin. In 1241 the Brethren of the Sword, whose strength and importance had been much increased by their union with the Teutonic knights, suffered another crushing defeat on the Neva, at the hands of Prince Alexander Nevski, and lost the principality of Pskof, which they had previously taken from Russia.

From this date Livonia and Esthonia were the victims of constant oppression, and the scenes of

incessant wars, and the people were plunged in the greatest depth of misery. In 1502 the Brethren of the Sword, under Walter of Plattenburg, routed the Russians, and a truce of fifty years was signed, which was, however, broken by Ivan IV., after a lapse of six years. A fresh period of war and misery for the unhappy people ensued; and finally Esthonia, which had borne the brunt of the wars, placed itself under Swedish protection, and the Brethren of the Sword purchased peace and the undisturbed possession of Courland by ceding Esthonia to Sweden, Livonia to Poland, and the remaining districts to Russia. Esthonia and Livonia were finally surrendered to Russia in 1721 at the peace of Nystadt, the Lutheran religion and the German language, as well as all their ancient privileges, being secured to the inhabitants; and Courland was incorporated into the Russian empire in 1795, at the third partition of Poland.

After the rise of St. Petersburg, the old Hanseatic town of Revel, founded about 1220, lost the greater part of the importance which it enjoyed in former times, when it was the great emporium of the Hanseatic league, and the whole trade between Germany and Northern Russia was in the hands of Revel merchants. Revel, like other Esthonian and Livonian towns, suffered severely during the constantly recurring wars which devastated the country. Its prosperity

revived during the fifty years of Swedish rule; but after its surrender to the Russians in 1710 its importance gradually diminished, until the completion of the St. Petersburg and Baltic ports railway made it a species of suburb to the capital. Now, owing to the construction of the railway and the improvement of the port, its trade is increasing every year, and threatens to rival that of St. Petersburg. The streets of Revel are narrow and crooked like those of most ancient towns. It contains 31,400 inhabitants, and a great number of churches, of which four are Russo-Greek, one Roman Catholic, and several Lutheran.

Of far greater importance than Revel, is Dorpat, which occupies the first place amongst the towns of the Baltic Provinces, and is the seat of a university, the head-quarters of all the intellectual activity of the country, and the central point whence German culture has radiated throughout the land. Few cities have experienced such vicissitudes; few have had the horrors of war brought home to them so forcibly, and so often. Plundered, wasted, and burnt down, Dorpat rose, Phœnix-like, again and again from its ashes. Of the ancient town only the ruins of the cathedral remain. The university, to which Dorpat owes all its real importance, was founded by Gustavus Adolphus in 1632; but its early prosperity was of brief duration; and for nearly a

century, from 1710 to 1802, its halls stood deserted. When the Russian armies overran Esthonia in 1710, the Professors fled to Sweden, bearing with them the library and all the scientific collections; but the university revived in 1802, under the auspices of Alexander I.

Centuries of oppression have had their natural effect on the character of the Esthonians. The development of many a noble quality has been checked and a spirit of stolid opposition to all superior influence has been fostered. On the whole, they are a good-natured race, affectionate in their family relations, and imbued with a keen perception of natural beauty, and a strong love of poetry and music. Drunkenness, with which they were almost universally credited, has much diminished since the abolition of serfdom in the Baltic Provinces, in 1816, and is now as rare in Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland, as it is common in the governments of the interior. Nothing can be imagined more squalid than an ordinary Esthonian hamlet. In the monotonous dreariness of a great Russian village there is, at least some attempt at a plan, some feeble effort at decoration; but the wretched jumble of miserable huts and enclosures, which the Esthonians call a village, is quite unworthy of the name.

Many of the customs and habits of the Esthonians have been handed down from ancient times. The

various observances at baptisms, marriages, and funerals, are very similar to those in use among the Tchermisses and Mordvins on the Volga. Marriages are arranged by go-betweens, who, in their best attire, visit the bride's house, and make their proposals to her father, not directly, but by a metaphor; representing themselves to come as envoys from their Tsar, who is anxiously searching for a pet lamb. If the father is favourably disposed, he invites them to search for the lamb in his house, and drinks to their success; the young lady is discovered, and after she has drunk to their welcome, the bridegroom is allowed to visit her. On the wedding day the processions of the bride and the bridegroom go separately to church, halting on their way, wherever a lake, a spring, or an old oak-tree appears, to place presents for the good spirit. After the wedding, the day is spent in feasting at the house of the bride's father; and the carousals are carried on through the night to the early morning; when the bride, carefully veiled, is conducted to the bridegroom's house, and "capped" by her mother, who combs her hair and puts on a cap. In the morning she is led round the house, and is bound to inaugurate her married life by cleaning out the stove. The houses are built of rough logs; and the inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex, live, work, and sleep in the same narrow space, in disorder and dirt, which is not

diminished in the winter months by the additional presence of sundry chickens, lambs, calves, and pigs. Both men and women dress in black or dark brown woollen material of their own weaving; and the gowns of the women are ornamented with red braid. Near Dorpat and Lake Peipus, the girls wear a very becoming diadem like the Russian women.

A line drawn from the southern extremity of Lake Peipus, through the little towns of Werro and Walk to the Bay of Riga, would pretty accurately divide the Esthonian from the Livonian population; and in passing from one side of this boundary line to the other the change becomes almost immediately perceptible. Single scattered homesteads take the place of small villages; the people are more good-humoured and sociable; gentle in their manners, and are gifted with a natural taste for poetry and music; many of their melodies are very pleasing, and contrast favourably with the discordant songs of the Esthonians, who, though devoid of musical taste, are imbued with a much stronger poetic instinct.

With the exception of Riga, Dorpat, and Pernau, Livonia can only boast of six small towns in an area of 18,000 square miles, a fact which creates no surprise when the unhappy history of the country is considered. The farmhouses are invariably built of pine logs, and thatched, and are furnished with

chimneys; and the interior is partitioned off into a number of little rooms, in which cleanliness and order prevail. The dwelling-house, stables, and other out-buildings enclose the yard, to which a large wooden gate affords an entrance.

The men and women used formerly to dress in white or pale grey, but of late years they have more and more discarded the national garb, and adopted the ordinary German dress. The women bestow special attention to the manufacture of gloves, woven of fine white wool, and tastefully stitched.

Riga is, next to St. Petersburg and Moscow, the most important town in Russia, and possesses 103,000 inhabitants. It was founded in 1200 by Bishop Albert Buckshöwden, who made it the seat of his bishopric, and founded its institutions on the model of the German Imperial towns, and it rose rapidly to importance. Disputes between the spiritual power and the Knights and Burghers were of frequent occurrence. The later Archbishops considered themselves sovereign lords of Riga; but the Burghers succeeded in maintaining their rights; even when Riga fell from its former high position, the constitution of the city remained intact.

In 1710, when Riga, with Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland were ceded to Russia, at the Peace of Nystadt, the privileges of the nobility and of the towns were guaranteed to the Baltic provinces by Peter the

Great. The attempts made in the last few years to introduce radical constitutional changes has excited so much discontent and ill feeling, that the discussion of this matter in the newspapers has been forbidden by Government.

The inhabitants of Riga are proud to call their town a German town; and justly so, for not only is the German element the strongest numerically, but all the intellectual life and culture of the place is exclusively German. The Russians, Livonians, and Esthonians are chiefly in the position of servants, day labourers, artisans, and small tradesmen; and even the few wealthy Russian merchants are still intellectually and socially not much higher than peasants, inasmuch as most of them were, prior to the decree of emancipation, serfs of Count Iberemetief.

In the meantime the Russian population is annually increasing; and the Russians aim at obtaining Burgher rights, and a share in the civic government by the establishment of a system of universal suffrage. Their claims are of course supported by the Government, but strongly opposed by the German Burghers, who are naturally averse to a course which would transfer the supreme power to the uneducated mass of the population.

Riga owes its commercial importance to its situation at the mouth of a great navigable river which opens water communication between the Baltic and the

interior of the country and White Russia. It is also connected by the Dunaberg and Vitebsk railway with Orel, Little Russia, and Odessa. The environs are a swampy desert, with no vegetation but a few stunted birches and firs; and with nothing to relieve the mournful monotony of the scene except the numerous little country-houses which the wealthier inhabitants of Riga have erected on the most favourable sites on the banks of the Düna.

Navigation on the Gulf of Riga is dangerous in stormy weather; and wrecking was at one time not only very prevalent on these coasts, but was actually encouraged by the Russian law; which allotted two-thirds the value of both ship and cargo to the owner, and one-third to the inhabitants of the spot on which a vessel came ashore. The peasants and fishermen were only too often guilty of luring vessels ashore by means of false beacons; and a nobleman belonging to a well-known family at Dagoe was convicted of lighting fires on his castle tower on stormy nights, and was punished by banishment to Siberia.

Mitau, the chief town of Courland, has 23,000 inhabitants, of whom no less than 3,000 are Jews, who seem to have a strong predilection for the province of Courland, in which 26,000 have taken up their abode. There are only 500 in Esthonia, and 1,000 in Livonia.

There are no villages in Courland. Noblemen's seats, with their auxiliary farm-buildings and single

homesteads, are scattered over the country. A Courland nobleman's house is generally a long building with a tiled roof, containing numerous suites of rooms, the half of which are always ready for the reception of guests. In winter these country-houses are mostly deserted; their owners having repaired to their "town-houses" in Mitau.

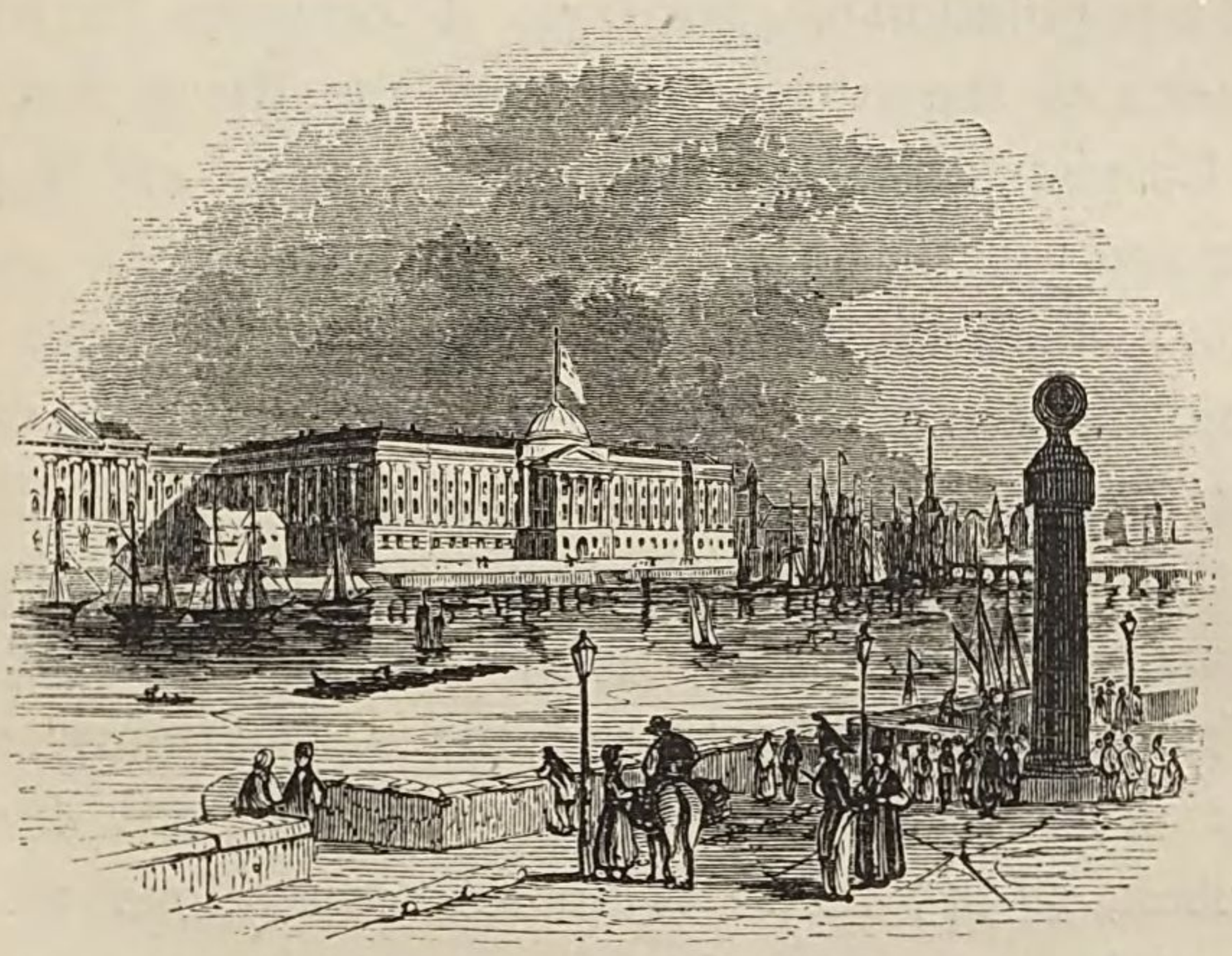
The dwellings and the food of the Courland peasantry were formerly of the most miserable description; of recent years, however, a great improvement has taken place.

Near Goldingen are seven settlements whose inhabitants, called "Courland Kings," never were serfs, and continue to be freeholders, and to enjoy some special privileges which they received from the knightly orders in return for military service. These so-styled "kings," are degraded by drink and idleness, and are as dirty in their cabins as they are rough in their manners.

The soil of these three provinces is fertile, and bears more corn and hemp than is required for home consumption, but it is in many parts swampy. In Esthonia and Livonia timber is an important product, and much attention is given to the raising of cattle. In Courland, through the scantiness of pasture, the cattle and sheep are of inferior breed.

The government of St. Petersburg is covered with woods and marshes; and is watered by the rivers

Pliusa and Luga, that flow into the Gulf of Finland; the Volkhof, Siasi, and Svir, emptying themselves into Lake Ladoga; and the Neva, running out of Lake Ladoga into the Gulf of Finland. The climate being unfavourable to the ripening of corn, which is, however, grown to some extent, the chief trade is in timber, and deals and masts are largely exported.



ST. PETERSBURG.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAUCASIA.

Configuration of the Country—Historical Traditions—Conquest by Russia — Schamyl — Emigration to Turkey — Armenia—Georgia—Tiflis—Tartars—Baku—Derbend.

CAUCASIA has a superficies of 172,843 square miles, and a population of 4,900,000. It occupies the whole breadth of the isthmus between the Black Sea and the Caspian, and lies between the 41° and 47° N. latitude and the 37° and 50° E. longitude.

The chain of the Caucasian Alps traverses the whole country, and extends in a south-easterly direction from the Black Sea, near the Straits of Yenikale, to the peninsula of Apsheron on the Caspian, a distance of about 750 miles. The breadth of the chain varies from 65 to 150 miles; its loftiest summits are Mount Elbruz, 18,571 feet, and Mount Kazbek, 16,545 feet. With few exceptions all the mountains are covered with perpetual ice and snow. On either side of the central chain numerous short subsidiary ranges branch off at right angles to it; one of which, emanating from Mount Elbruz, is the watershed between the Black Sea and the Caspian, on the north side of the Caucasus. From the northern

slope of the mountains flows the river Kuban, which falls into the Sea of Azof, and the Terek which falls into the Caspian. The southern slope is drained by the Rion, the ancient Phasis, which flows into the Black Sea, and by the Kur, which rises in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, traverses almost the whole of Transcaucasia, and falls into the Caspian after having received its important tributary the Araxes. The Terek and the Kuban are only navigable in parts; and the rivers south of the Caucasus, though otherwise more important, are comparatively useless for navigation, except in the lower portions of their course, on account of cataracts and rapids.

The tableland of Armenia belongs to Transcaucasia, and consists of high lying terraces, 5,000 to 6,000 feet above the level of the sea, divided from each other by parallel chains of mountains, which, in Great Ararat attain to a height of 17,112 feet.

For administrative purposes Caucasia is divided into five governments: Tiflis, Kutais, Erivan, Baku, and Stovropol; and into the districts of the Terek, the Kuban, and Daghestan. Ten principal tribes inhabit the country, the Circassians, Abhasians, Ossets, Tchetchens, Lesghians, Persians, Armenians, Georgians, Tartars, and Turks; the four last inhabit Transcaucasia. The Russians form only about 30 per cent. of the population.

Strictly speaking, Caucasia belongs half to Europe

and half to Asia, the chain of the Caucasus forming the boundary. By the ukase of the 20th and 31st December, 1867, Trans- and Cis-Caucasia were united into one province under a governor-general.

The chief military route over the Caucasus is by the Dariel Pass, which is practicable for vehicles, but is rendered exceedingly dangerous by frequent falls of stones, and by the spring avalanches. The railway is open to the fortress of Vladikavkaz, at the northern extremity of the pass, and the journey thence over the mountain to Tiflis can be performed in about two days. Tiflis is connected with Poti on the Black Sea by a railway, which is to be continued to Baku on the Caspian. The Russians are convinced that this will ultimately be the main route to Bokhara and India. The second pass is that of Derbend, "the Iron Gate." This ancient highway from Europe to Asia coasts the Caspian, and is the sole means of communication between the lower valley of the Kura and the northern steppes of the Terek. The road bears some resemblance to that between Nice and Marseilles; but hundreds of mountain torrents render it almost impassable in spring and autumn. A third short posting road leads over the Western Caucasus to Novo-Rossisk on the Black Sea; and other passes exist, known only to the natives, and barely practicable, except to mountaineers.

The soil and climate of the country vary consider-

ably in its different portions. In the northern steppes timber and water are scarce; the brooks dry up in summer, and the inhabitants have to depend on the scanty supplies of water collected in hollows and gullies. The winter is very severe; heavy snow-storms and a temperature of 45° Fahrenheit of frost are of common occurrence; and during the parching summer the thermometer goes up to 90°, and even higher.

The prosperous condition of several German colonies, even here, gives evidence to the fact that the steppe can, by intelligent cultivation, be made to return fair profits; but to both Russians and Asiatics the land is like a block of marble awaiting the hand of the sculptor. The base of the mountains is covered with timber and abounds with fur-bearing animals. The scenery is most diversified; the soil of the valleys produces every species of grain; and the climate resembles that of Southern Switzerland, of Vevey, or Montreux. Apricots and peaches ripen, and pears and cherries are excellent and plentiful. After the rainfall in the spring, the grass attains an immense height. The Cossacks of the line have some settlements along the base of the range, but no actual peasantry exists.

The Caucasus has always possessed a certain fascination not for the Russians only, but also for western nations, and is peculiarly rich in historical

traditions, and in memories of ancient times and ancient nations. Here, to the rocks of Elbruz, Prometheus lay chained; and to Colchis, where the Phasis flowed towards the sea through ever green woods, came the Argonauts. The present Kutais is the old capital of King Æētes, near which, in the sacred grove of Ares, hung the golden fleece.

The gold mines which the Russians discovered in 1864 were apparently known to the Greeks, whose colony, Dioscurias, was an assemblage of 300 diverse nationalities. Herodotus and Strabo both speak of the various nations, speaking various tongues, which dwelt amongst the mighty Caucasian mountains. Here on the coasts of the stormy and dangerous Black Sea arose the famous Pontine kingdom which, in spite of its valiant resistance under Mithridates, fell a victim to Roman aggression. Along the rivers Kura and Rion ran the old commercial road from Europe to Asia, which enriched the Venetians and the Genoese in the middle ages. Up to recent times this trade consisted not only of all sorts of other merchandise, but of slaves; numberless girls and women were conveyed to Turkish harems, and there exercised an important influence on the character of the Tartar and Mongol races.

In the middle ages the Caucasus was the route by which the wild Asiatic hordes, the Goths, Khasars, Huns, Avars, Mongols, Tartars, and Arabs crossed

from Asia into Europe; and consequently its secluded valleys contain a population composed of more different and distinct races than any other district in the world.

The mineral riches which doubtless exist in the Caucasus are still unexplored. The mountaineers cast their own bullets, and make powder from sulphur found in the mountains. Granite, red and green porphyry, basalt, variously-coloured marbles and rock-crystals are plentiful. Milk-quartz, which is frequently found, indicates the existence of mineral ores. Black and blue foxes are still to be met with, as well as squirrels, otters, and beavers. Wolves, wild boars, and jackals abound, and the unwelcome appearance of a great royal tiger now and then fills the dwellers on the shores of the Araxes with terror. Buffaloes and bisons frequent the wooded heights, and on the loftiest peaks the Caucasian chamois (*Capra caucasica*), the chamois, the snow-hen, and the *Tetraogathus caucasica* are sometimes to be seen.

It was in the 16th century, under Ivan the Terrible, that Russia first turned her attention to the conquest of the Caucasus; but it was not till 1859 that the defeat and capture of the famous Schamyl brought about the final subjugation of the country.

It is impossible to withhold sympathy from these valiant mountaineers in their gallant efforts to main-

tain their national independence against the encroachments of their powerful neighbour; but, putting aside all strategical and political considerations, the constant raids of these warlike marauders on the Cossack stanitsas of the Terek and the Kuban, and the wavering attitude of the Mahometan tribes of Transcaucasia, which was strongly influenced by every changing incident of the war, were quite sufficient to account for the pertinacity with which the Russians pursued their aim.

In 1785 the mountaineers had been incited to take arms by a so-called prophet, Scheick Mansur, but he was seized and banished to Solovetsk, on the White Sea. In 1820 a Mollah, Kasi by name, made his appearance in Daghestan, and began to preach the "Kasawat," that is, holy war against the Russians. To him succeeded another equally fanatical adventurer, Hamset Beg. The work which they had begun was carried on by Schamyl, who far surpassed his predecessors in all the qualities which make up a successful guerilla chief, and who maintained the unequal conflict against the enemies of his country for twenty-five years with singular good fortune, undaunted courage, untiring energy, and conspicuous ability. He was of the tribe of the Lesghians in Daghestan, and was born in 1796, in the village of Gimri, of poor shepherd parents. In spite of his humble origin, he raised himself to the rank of an Imaum, surrounded

himself with a strong body-guard of devoted adherents, whom he named Murides, and succeeded in fanning to a flame the patriotic ardour of his fellow-countrymen.

The capture of the mountain fastness of Achulgo in 1839 seemed to be the death-blow of Schamyl's cause, for it brought about the loss of the whole of Daghestan, the very focus of the Murides' activity. Schamyl barely escaped being made prisoner, and was forced to yield up his son, Djammel-Edden, only nine years of age, as a hostage. The boy was sent to St. Petersburg and placed in a cadet corps, which he left at the conclusion of his military education somewhere about 1850, and returned to his native country in 1854, where he died a few years later.

In 1840 the Tchetchens, who had previously been pacified, rose in arms once more, and Daghestan and other parts of the country followed their example. The country of the Tchetchens was a specially favourable theatre for the conflict with the Russians; its long mountain chains, rocky fastnesses, impenetrable forests, and wild precipices and gorges rendered ambuscades and surprises of constant and, to the Russians, fatal occurrence. During the earlier stages of the war, Russia had ransomed the officers taken prisoners by the mountaineers, but, subsequently, no quarter was given on either side. At last, by means of a great concentration of troops on

all the threatened points, by fortifying the chief central stations, and by forming broad military roads throughout the district, the Russians succeeded in breaking down Schamyl's resistance. He now suffered one reverse after another. His chief fastnesses, Dargo, Weden, and Guni, were successively stormed and destroyed; and, finally, he himself and his family were taken prisoners. He was astonished and, it is said, not altogether gratified to find that a violent death was not to close his romantic career. He and his family were at first interned at Kaluga in Russia, both a house and a considerable sum of money for his maintenance being assigned to him. But after a few years he was allowed to remove to Mecca, where he died. His sons and grandsons, who have entirely adopted the manners of the Russians, are officers in the Circassian guard. In 1864 the pacification of the whole country was accomplished, and a few years later the abolition of serfdom was proclaimed at Tiflis.

After the subjugation of the various mountain tribes, the Circassians had the choice given them by the Government of settling on the low country along the Kuban, or of emigrating to Turkey. The latter course was chosen by the bulk of the nation, urged thereto, in great measure, by envoys from Turkey. As many as 400,000 are said to have come to the ports, where the Sultan had promised to send vessels

to receive them; but delays took place, and a large number died of want and disease. Those who reached Turkey were settled on the west coasts of the Black Sea, in Bulgaria and near Varna, and proved themselves most troublesome and unruly subjects. Most of those who at first remained in Circassia followed their fellow-countrymen in 1874.

The present inhabitants of Circassia are a handsome race, with slim figures, small hands and feet, broad shoulders, aquiline noses, and dark grey eyes; their gait is elastic, their dress, perhaps, the most picturesque in the world. The blood-feud of the Circassians is handed down from generation to generation, and there is but one way of appeasing it. The Circassian steals a child belonging to his enemy, brings it up as one of his own, and then gives it back to its parents, and thus converts the bitterest enmity into the closest friendship. The dwellings are mere wooden huts plastered with mud. On the walls of the chief room hang arms of all sorts; on the floor are mats, and amongst the richer classes thick carpets; and all round the room, along the walls, are low divans. Horned cattle and herds of sheep compose the wealth of the Circassian, for trade and agriculture are distasteful to him.

No Circassian noble can wed a girl of low birth, nor indeed any girl until, he has purchased her of her parents by a payment of money, oxen, or sheep; and

even then he is obliged to carry her off by force, and as if against her will.

The mountaineers, with all their ignorance and savageness, possess good natural gifts, and, to a certain extent, a humane disposition; they fight not for plunder only, but for glory, and that their deeds may be talked of in their villages and homes.

The Lesghians, who live on the north of the Caucasus range, and between it and the Caspian Sea, like the Circassians, are stately in figure, and, in spite of their ragged clothes, of noble mien, standing and moving gracefully, and speaking simply, without gesticulating or raising the voice. They are all devout Mahometans. The Avars, a branch of the Lesghian stock, "are said, alone among these peoples, to have a regular literary language, which, however, is written in Persian characters."[1]

The Mingrelians and Georgians and Imeritians, who are mostly of the Greek Church, and are under the executive power of the Archbishop of Tiflis, are the handsomest of the races inhabiting the Caucasus. The women are famed for their beautiful eyes; but their faces are often disfigured by an over large long nose, bending inwards to the mouth. Their beauty is but short-lived. They are

[1] "Transcaucasia and Ararat," p. 53.

marriageable at twelve, and at thirty, or earlier, they bear all the appearances of old age.

In spite of its swamps and fever-stricken valleys, the province of Mingrelia, near the Black Sea, is the most beautiful portion of the Caucasus. The inhabitants "are the ne'er-do-wells of the Caucasian family. . . . . A lazy race; . . . . well-made, good-looking fellows, but with a dull and heavy expression which is sensual as far as it goes."[1] After the Crimean War the young Prince Nicholas formally surrendered his rights to Russia in consideration of a large sum to be settled on himself and family. "Eh, bien, mon Prince, vous avez vendu votre principauté," some one is reported to have said on this occasion. "Oh, non," was the answer, "je ne l'ai pas vendue, c'est le gouvernement qui me l'a achetée."

A considerable portion of the Caucasus belonged to the great kingdom of Armenia, which in the course of time was subjugated by the Arabs, was afterwards conquered by the Mongols, and was finally entirely destroyed by the Turks and Persians. From the epoch of the twelfth century, the Armenians forsook their country in great numbers, and established themselves in Georgia, in the Crimea, in Astrakhan, in Moldavia, and in Poland.

Early in the eighteenth century, that portion of

[1] "Transcaucasia and Ararat," p. 99.

the nation which had clung to its ancient home made a desperate but vain attempt to shake off the yoke of Persia.

Since the fourth century of our era the Armenians have remained equally firm against the enticements of Mahometanism and the persuasions of the Orthodox Eastern Church. In consequence, however, of a refusal to submit to the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon, the Armenian Church is considered to be tainted by the Monophysite heresy, which that Council condemned. The Patriarch is chosen by all the Armenian bishops throughout the world; and the ancient monastery of Etchmiadzin, at the foot of the majestic mountain of Ararat, is the meeting-house of the Synod, and the centre of spiritual power.

Armenia is the most southern part of Transcaucasia. The soil is hot and dry; but, owing to the system of irrigation, very fertile. For months at a time no rain falls, and hardly a blade of grass would grow, were it not for the magnificent canal system, the construction of which dates from a time prior to the occupation of the country by its present inhabitants, probably from the time of the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians; for it extends wherever these nations held sway, without any reference to later geographical divisions. The canals which water Erivan and its neighbourhood draw their supplies chiefly from the Gotcha Lake. Erivan means

"the Visible," and is supposed to owe its name to the tradition that, when Noah looked down on the earth from Ararat, this was the first tract of dry land upon which his glance rested. The town is quite oriental in appearance, and has 30,000 inhabitants. In 1582 the Turks took it from the Persians, and Teshad Pasha turned it into a powerful fortress; but in 1604 the Persians recaptured it. In 1679 an earthquake caused great destruction in the city. On the 13th October, 1827, the Russian Prince Paskievitch (who bears the title Erivanski) carried it by storm; and on February 22nd, 1828, the town and the province of the same name were annexed to Russia.

The Armenians are an intelligent and laborious people, and rival the Jews in their success in trade and commercial pursuits. They are short in stature, and inclined to grow fat at an early age; but generally good looking, and fair in complexion. Their industry and desire of advancement takes them into foreign countries for the purposes of trade; and a large proportion of the foreign and internal trade of the East is in their hands.

From early times the family of Melek was held to be the first in the country, and enjoyed a sort of Stadtholdership, which was but too often employed to the detriment of the public, and the people fled from the Meleks as from the plague. After the Russian

occupation of Transcaucasia the power of the family was abolished.

In most Armenian villages there is a poet or minstrel, usually blind, who not only delights the people with his songs and recitations, generally in the Tartar language, but often wanders as far as Persia and Turkey.

In the beginning of the fourth century B.C., Georgia, called by the Russians Grusia, was already an independent kingdom; and ancient Georgian chronicles aver that it was in the third year of the reign of their king Aderk that Christ was born; that it was the Apostle St. Andrew who converted the Georgians to Christianity; and that he built a church in Atzhour, to which he presented the picture of the Blessed Virgin, painted by St. Luke. In 1857 this much venerated picture was stolen from the church at Gonatsk, and was found again hidden in a thicket in the vicinity, but stripped of the ornaments of gold and precious stones with which the liberality of the Georgian kings had adorned it.

Byzantine Christianity spread over the country in the fourth century, and has maintained itself ever since, in spite of the successive tyrannies of Turks, Persians, and Mongols. Chardin, quoted by Captain Telfer, says that "the Georgians, like the other Christians by whom they are bounded on the north and west, follow the strange custom of building the greater number of their churches on the tops of

mountains in remote and inaccessible places;" and that "the Georgians are advised that, whatever the nature of their transgressions, they insure remission by building a small church. For my part," adds Chardin, "I believe that they erect them in such places to avoid the expense of decorating and endowing them."[1]

On the Kura, about fourteen miles below its junction with the Aragna, lies Tiflis, the capital and seat of the government of Caucasia. The Kura divides the city into two parts. The streets of the ancient Asiatic quarter are narrow, crooked, and evil smelling, and are composed of wretched stone or mud hovels, consisting of one storey, half underground, roofed with a thick layer of earth or mud. The new, or Russian, town, just like every other modern Russian town, has broad streets at right angles to each other, and tall houses.

Actual winter lasts but a short time in Tiflis; but during the preceding season of mud and mire, the unpaved streets are all but impassable. During this season the Tartar Bazaar, or Maidan, enjoys an evil pre-eminence, a cloud of fetid vapour persistently hanging over it. The mean temperature in Tiflis during the four hottest summer months is 75°, which, in this town, surrounded by high hills of slatey lime-

[1] "The Crimea," vol. i., p. 141.

stone, and where for months together not a drop of rain falls, is almost unendurable.

The mixed population presents a series of curious and interesting pictures to the stranger in Tiflis. Here are to be seen Tartars with their black, red, or grey beards and shining red caps; sleek Armenians in clean kaftans and Muscovite head-gear; slim, lithe, often ragged Georgians; Persians with nails dyed red, and tall black fur caps, coloured stockings, and heel-less slippers covering only their toes; water carriers in felt boots and conical sheep-skin caps; the porters, *mushah*, whose head, according to the fashion of Imeritia, is covered with a bit of cloth fastened to a round frame, *Papanaka;* Greeks in their well known red fez, short vests, and broad blue trousers; two-wheeled creaking arabas, with ungreased axles, drawn by two, four, or even six buffaloes, and containing either a huge skin of wine, or a whole family of women and children. Occasionally a string of camels or a Persian caravan, mounted on slender sumpter mules, blocks the street; and right into the middle of it drives airily the smart St. Petersburg droshky of a bearded Russian merchant, or of an officer blazing with decorations. Two characteristic and very important personages in Tiflis street life are the porters and the water-carriers, the Mushahs and Toluchtchiks; the former is always ready, for a consideration,

to carry off on his back, which a "carrying bag" has transformed into a hump, any movable article whatsoever, a piano, a wardrobe, or a great cupboard; and considers it a despicable weakness to stop or to rest. Formerly, when the streets of Tiflis were even worse paved than at present, and the clayey soil heavily clogged the feet of the pedestrian after the smallest shower, the mushah often exchanged inanimate for living freights.

The water-carrier is a more serious personage; and the exigencies of his profession prevent his indulging in any of the amusements of life. Unlike the mushah, who aims merely at gaining a living, he is set on saving up money, and is but a passing guest in Tiflis; he is a Nestorian in faith, and as soon as he has made his fortune he returns to his native Chaldæa.

Mr. Cutts, who went by desire of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York to the Assyrian Christians, visited Tiflis in 1877. He states, "In the town we found a considerable Christian population. The poorer Nestorians go in large numbers to Russia, much as the Irish used to come to England at harvest time in search of work; and some of them settle in Russia; about Erivan, for example, there are two or three Nestorian villages, and about Tiflis, others. These settled Nestorians have, for the most part, conformed to the Russian Church. Tiflis is the

centre of the floating Nestorian population. Here, I was told, there are as many as 5,000 of them, chiefly sojourners of the poorer class, who stay six months, a year, two years, and then return to Oroomiah or Kurdistan; but some have settled here, and some of them are in a higher social position, *e.g.*, merchants in the bazaar, &c. I made the acquaintance of some of these Tiflis Nestorians, and found that they had lately formed a committee for the purpose of establishing here some kind of training college in which promising young Nestorians might receive the earlier part of their education, thence to be transferred to Europe, and then return as teachers of their countrymen."

Tiflis is very favourably situated for trade; its commerce is chiefly in the hands of Armenians. In the bazaars, meat, soap, tea, sugar, brandy, and fruit of all sorts, which, though gathered in the half-ripe state preferred by the natives, is magnificent—are set out side by side. Guilds exist among the artisans, as in Germany. They were introduced from Persia during the Persian domination.

The best wine of the country is a red wine, not unlike Burgundy, which, according to the Georgians, is made from a vine that dates from Noah's time; it has a disagreeable after-taste from the buffalo skins in which it is kept, and which are washed out with

naphtha before being filled. Although it is greatly appreciated for its flavour, it is cheap in price. Mr. Wilbraham says that "the Georgians have the reputation of being the greatest drinkers in the world; the daily allowance, without which the labourer will not work, is four bottles; and the higher classes generally exceed this quantity; on grand occasions the consumption is incredible." According to Smith and Dwight, "the ordinary ration of an inhabitant of Tiflis, from the mechanic to the prince, is said to be a *tonk*, meaning between five and six bottles of Bordeaux. The best wine costs but four cents the bottle, while the common is less than a cent."[1]

Tiflis is connected by a railway with the port of Poti, on the Black Sea. Poti is described by Mr. Bryce as a melancholy, pestilential town, with business by no means brisk. The country for fifteen miles on the road to Mtskhéta is, in summer, burnt entirely brown; and the villages consist of wretched huts, mere holes in the earth, with roofs raised but little above the ground.

Tartars and Armenians alike change their dwelling-places in summer, for in the low-lying plains the heat is then unendurable, and fever very prevalent. The winter is severe, and spring is eagerly expected.

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[1] "Travels in the Caucasus: Georgia," p. 192. Quoted by Mr. McCulloch in "Biographical Dictionary, Georgia."

As soon as the weather begins to get warm camels, horses, donkeys, oxen, and cows are heavily laden, and the whole procession moves off to the meadows, which lie at the foot of the hills. For this journey the Tartars put on their best clothes and ornaments. The nobles ride on richly caparisoned horses ; the rest go chiefly on foot. The arabas, in which the women and girls travel, are covered with carpets of the brightest hues.

The house of a rich Tartar generally contains two storeys, in the lower of which are the stables, the kitchen, and the servants' rooms. The upper floor, where the family dwells, is approached from a large balcony to which access is gained by a wooden staircase, and on to which opens a little anteroom. Here shoes and slippers are left, and through it strangers enter ; but intimate friends walk in through a large window reaching from floor to ceiling, which is the chief ornament of the house, and sometimes occupies the whole side wall. The roof and the walls are covered with Persian arabesques. On the walls, in niches, are odds and ends of glass, porcelain, and china, and on pegs hang various weapons. The floor is covered with carpets, and the fireplace, over which the Persian lion prances in effigy, is painted in bright colours, but is merely for ornament ; the warming apparatus consisting of metal basins, called *manigalés*, filled with hot coals. Though the reception rooms are comfort-

able and attractive enough, the family apartments are unclean and wretched; and the women and children, well dressed out of doors, are dirty and slatternly at home.

The eastern extremity of the Caucasus forms the peninsula of Apsheron. Here, on the slope of a hill, lies the picturesque town of Baku, the ancient Getara. Previous to its incorporation in the Russian empire, Baku and its naphtha springs were long an apple of discord between the Persian shahs and the Armenian emperors. Originally under Arabian rule, it has several times belonged to Persia and several times to Turkey. The town now contains 15,000 inhabitants, most of whom are Mahometans. It possesses special importance from the trade carried on with Astrakhan and Persia; exporting naphtha and salt, and importing silk, cotton, shawls, woollen goods, indigo, and tobacco. The heat in summer is very great, the mean being 78·2° Fahrenheit in the month of July; but the winters are mild, and frosts are of rare occurrence. The climate is excessively dry, and there is almost always a high wind blowing either from the north or the south. The environs of Baku are entirely devoid not only of trees, but even of brushwood.

Slightly to the north-east of Baku, beyond the Tartar village of Balakhan, extends a barren plain dotted with little white houses. Here are the naphtha

wells, which give a large yield, and of which large quantities are exported. East of the naphtha springs is Atagh-Kuddha, the fire temple of the Ghebres, a circular spot about a mile in circumference, from the centre of which issues a bluish flame, which is tended day and night by a solitary priest of fire, who inhabits a small temple built over one of the springs. So impregnated is the neighbouring soil with this inflammable gas that the inhabitants, when fire is needed for culinary purposes, simply make a hole in the earth and apply a light to the escaping gas, and close it when the cooking is done.[1]

To the south-east of this district rises a tolerably high hill, from whose summit may be seen the singular picture of sundry small salt lakes, and in all directions the blaze of large smokeless fires. Here hundreds of thousands of cubic feet of gas are escaping daily into the air, all attempts to collect and to distribute it for lighting purposes having hitherto failed.

Derbend, the chief town of Daghestan, rises above the Caspian Sea on the spurs of the Caucasus, which are here clothed with vineyards, orchards, and fields of maize. The population consists of 15,739, chiefly Mahometans, with a few Armenians and Jews. The town guards the narrow pass between the sea and the end of the Caucasian range, whence starts the mighty wall called Gog and Magog, or Alexander's

[1] "Keimer's Persia," p. 319. Quoted by McCulloch.

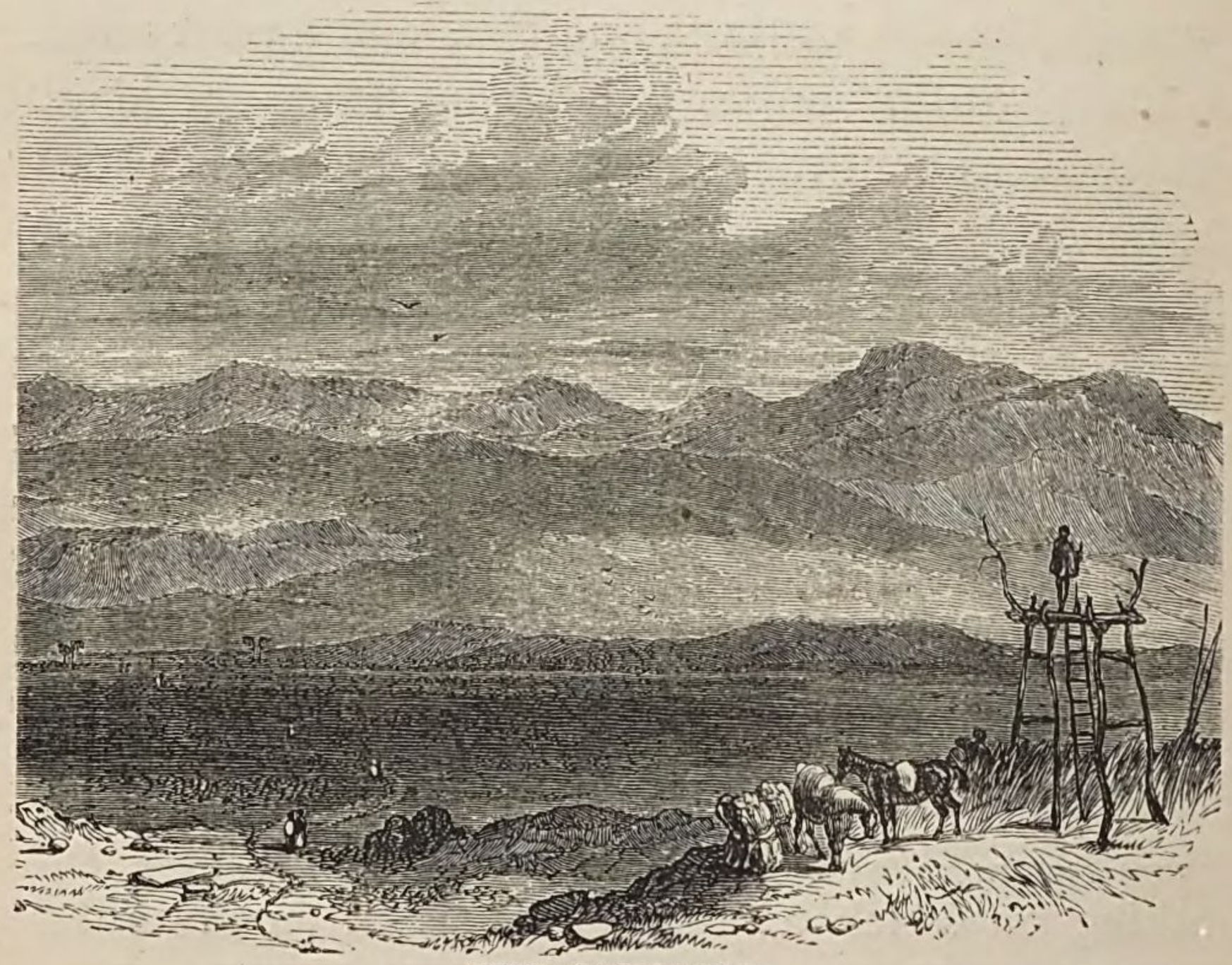
Wall, of singular masonry, built probably 1,500 years ago, and originally over thirty feet high and nine to ten feet thick. From the fortifications of Derbend, it extended over hill and dale to the Black Sea, and was provided at intervals with iron doors, watch towers, and forts, so as to form a defensive barrier, between Persia and the land on the Euphrates, against the northern barbarians. In later times it was restored by the Parthian and Persian kings, and considerable ruins of it still exist.

It is not known what Derbend was anciently called, nor by whom it was founded; this much only is certain, that Nushirvan founded the khanate of Derbend in the 6th century, and that the present name of the town first appears in history since that date. Somewhere about the year 1220 the Mongols carried Derbend by storm, and thus opened the way for the conquest of the South Russian plains. Under Mustapha I. the Turks held a part of the town, but were driven out by the Emir Hamse. The Russians wrested it from the Persians in 1722, but were compelled to restore it to them in 1736. They recaptured it in 1796, and annexed it finally in 1806.

Professor Bryce remarks on the inhabitants of Transcaucasia:[1] "There is no unity among these races, no common national feeling to appeal to; nothing on which a national kingdom (such as has

[1] "Transcaucasia and Ararat," p. 129, 130.

been suggested by Mr. Ashton Dilke) could be based. Nothing, in fact, keeps them together but the Russian army and administration, and the loyalty of both of these to the Tsar is that which keeps Russia together, rising as it does to the dignity of a national worship. . . . Improbable, however, as the separation of Transcaucasia seems, its Russification in anything more than administration seems almost as distant." Elsewhere he writes:[1] "Transcaucasia is so rich by nature, so important by position, that nobody can doubt that it has a considerable part to play in history. What will that part be? Are commerce and culture likely to advance?"



THE CAUCASUS.

[1] "Transcaucasia and Ararat," p. 125.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE URAL MOUNTAINS.

Configuration — The Demidofs — Mining — Ekaterinburg — Steppe — Bachkirs — Cossacks.

THE Ural Mountains are the longest chain running from north to south in the Old World, and take their name probably from the Tartar word meaning belt. The height and breadth of the chain are in no way proportionate to its length. The breadth varies considerably, and in its widest part is 116 miles; Konjakofski, its loftiest summit, is only 5,397 feet high. "In a limited sense they extend from the Arctic Ocean in the north, to Orenburg in the south, through eighteen degrees of latitude," a distance of 1,244 miles; "but considered as traversing the islands of Novaya Zemlia, and terminating in the high grounds between the Aral and Caspian Seas, they cover an extent of thirty degrees of latitude."[1] "A western chain of mountains leaves the middle chain in latitude 62°, trending N.N.W. 500 miles to the promontory of Kamin Nos. Mean elevation, 200 to 600 feet. The chief part of this chain is called the Timan

[1] Keith Johnston. "Geographical Dictionary."

Mountains, first known in Western Europe only in 1843."[1]

The Ural consists of a more or less connected chain, which in the south divides into several parallel branches. To the east the heights fall away sheer, without any intervening hills, into the Siberian steppes; but the slope on the western side is exceedingly gradual, and is covered with woods and meadows. The whole chain may be divided into four portions; the Northern Arctic, the Northern or Vogulian, the Central or Verchoturian, and the Southern or Bachkir Ural.

In Nova Zembla isolated summits rise to a height of nearly 3,500 feet. The Northern, or Wogulian Ural, called also the barren Ural, is a steep rocky range entirely bare of wood, of which the highest point, the Pauschär, is nearly 4,800 feet high. The Central Ural, which extends from the sources of the Petchora to Ufa, bears the name of the Ore-abounding, on account of its immense mineral wealth, and affords the most level roadway from Europe to Asia.

North of latitude 50° 45′ the mountains are covered with dense forests of larch and birch, and with marshes. South of this point the vegetation is richer, and the oak, lime, elm, and ash flourish.

The mountains are composed of crystalline and

[1] Keith Johnston. "Geographical Dictionary."

slatey rocks, and are rich in gold and iron and other metals; and great hills here and there consist of magnetic iron ore, the richest in iron of all the ores, from which most of the iron in Russia is made. The most important is the Blagodat, *i.e.* Blessing, near the town of Turinsk, which rises to a height of between 400 and 500 feet, and is crowned with a chapel on the higher of the two peaks into which its summit is cleft. The magnetic iron from the Blagodat has long been in use among the neighbouring tribes of the Voguls, but it was not until the beginning of the last century that the Russians became aware of the treasures it contained and commenced mining operations. It is impossible to give an account of the mineral wealth of the Ural without alluding to the family of the Demidofs, who first developed it.

In the 17th century, Demid Grigorievitch Antufef, a crown serf from the village of Pavtshino, betook himself with his brothers to the government of Tula, where some descendants of the family still exist amid the ranks of the petty burghers. Demid's son, Nikita, born in Tula in 1656, married the daughter of the armourer Feodore of Tula, and in 1679 both he and his father were received as members of the guild of armourers. When Demid died, in 1690, he left his son in possession of extensive workshops and of a considerable capital.

During the war of 1696 with Turkey, the armourers

of Tula were called upon to give up the arms in their possession, and Nikita, with many of his fellow-craftsmen, appeared before Peter the Great; who, struck by the stalwart figure of the young smith, remarked to the bystanders that the young fellow would be a proper recruit for the Preofrashenskoi Guards, words in those times tantamount to a command. Nikita fell at the Tsar's feet, and implored that, as the only son of an aged mother, he might be spared. "Well, make me 300 halberds as good as this one," said Peter, "and bring them to me at Voronej." "They shall be better," answered Nikita, confidently. He kept his word, and Peter not only paid him in excess of the price stipulated, but gave him a present of a silver goblet and of German cloth enough for a suit of clothes.

The armourer of Tula continued in high favour with the Tsar, who on the occasion of the birth of Nikita's son made him a present of a considerable plot of land containing some productive veins of iron ore in the forest of Molinof, near Tula. At a later date he made him a further grant of the ironworks of Neviask, and of the privilege of opening copper-mines in the Ural, as well as of other land; and in 1720 ennobled him under the name of Demidof. Having opened in succession the important mines of Shuralinsk, Werchne, Tagilsk, and Mishni Tagilsk, Nikita died in November, 1725.

Through the enterprise and energy of the Demidof family the Chusovaya was rendered navigable, and roads were constructed throughout the mining districts. But the Ural was by no means the sole field of their enterprise and of their exertions. They re-opened the old smelting-works on the Irtysh, popularly known as the "Tchoud works;" and under leave from the Government, to whom they belonged, worked the gold and silver mines of Barnaul; and their wealth gradually attained a fabulous amount.

When Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812, Nicholas Demidof, great-grandson of the armourer of Tula, at his own expense raised a regiment for the defence of his country, and subsequently entered Paris at its head. He spent the remainder of his life abroad, in Paris and in his magnificent villa of San Donato, near Florence.

His second son, Prince Anatol Nikolaivitch Demidof, Prince of San Donato, succeeded to the vast estates of his family; and married, in 1841, the Princess Mathilde, daughter of Jérome Bonaparte. But this union was dissolved four years later, and he died childless in Paris a few years ago.

A contemporary of the first Demidof, and his rival in genius and energy, was another blacksmith of Tula, named Botachef, who "left behind him twenty-five large works, extending over something like 1,500,000 acres, and employing a population of

upwards of 50,000 souls."[1] From these two men started and spread the mining industry of Russia. Mr. Herbert Barry writes:—"The immediate descendants of the two great blacksmiths, of Demidof and of Botachef, found themselves enormously wealthy, beyond all necessity of enterprise or exertion. They acquired great influence in the empire, were raised to the nobility and appointed to high offices of state by the Imperial Government. Their attention was thus withdrawn from the sources of their greatness, and the management of their mines, left to the hands of their subordinates, deteriorated. As time rolled on, other people began to open copper mines and iron foundries in competition with theirs; prices and profits were reduced; but the two families, accustomed to greatness, neither applied themselves to maintain the efficiency of their mines, nor to reduce this personal expenditure, which exceeded the incomes they derived from them. They soon began to borrow large sums on the mortgage of their properties, chiefly to the Government, but in part to anybody who would make them a loan. The families of the Demidofs and Botachefs, in their system of borrowing at all hands, were soon embarrassed to meet the payments of interest as they fell due; and Government readily took advantage of

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 254.

their default by taking the estates and works of the insolvent families into its own management; nominally still for the benefit of the proprietors, but in the first place for the satisfaction of the claims of the Government, under the control of a committee of tutelage, or so-called '*Tutor*.' From this time the ruin of the old mining families was very rapid, and is now, in many cases complete; so that nominal owners of vast properties are, in fact, quite impoverished. The system of Government tutelage never answered in the management of mines, and from the time it became common, the profits derived from the mines have diminished and the works deteriorated." But though, most of the mines have passed away from the family, the copper-mine of Nijni Tagilsk, the first of any importance opened, is owned by the descendants of the Demidofs to the present day.[1]

It must be borne in mind that in treating of the mines of the Ural, the mines of the Asiatic side are necessarily included with those of the European side. The ridge of the Urals divides Europe from Asia; and on the summit of the chief pass is an obelisk erected to commemorate the conquest of Siberia by Yermak the Cossack, in 1573, with the word "Europe" painted on the one side, and "Asia" on the other. The gold mines are almost without ex-

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 254.

ception on the eastern or Siberian slope of the mountains.

According to the Almanach de Gotha, the quantity of gold produced from the mines of Russia, in the hands of the Government and in private hands was in the years—

1851 to 1855	24,730	kilogrammes.
1856 to 1860	26,570	„
1861 to 1865	24,084	„
1866 to 1870	30,050	„
1871 to 1875	33,380	„
	138,814	„

amounting to rather more than 2,755 cwt. The amount produced in the same period in Australia was 7,108 cwt. and in the United States 7,630 cwt.

The Urals are rich also in malachite and other copper ores; in lead, silver, and platinum, and in the most precious stones, diamonds, rubies, topazes, sapphires, agates, and chalcedony.

Platinum is found in grains with auriferous sands, in little valleys through which a brook usually flows, and as much as 800 cwt. per annum have been obtained [1] from the Russian washings, which produce

[1] "Natural History Rambles. In Search of Minerals," p. 236.

more than all the other washings of the world combined. Occasionally large lumps have been found—one of the enormous size of twenty-one pounds [1]—but these are never quite pure, being alloyed with other metals, palladium, rhodium, osmium, and iridium, all of which are of great commercial value when separated.

Between the magnetic hills of Tagil is the copper-mine of Tagil, ninety fathoms deep, which produces annually an enormous yield of various copper ores, including malachite, of which a mass eighteen feet long nine feet wide was cut into and estimated to contain nearly 250 tons.[2] The great pillars in the Izaak Church at St. Petersburg came from this mine.

The village of Nijni Tagilsk is one of the great centres of the mining industry. It covers a space of nearly three square miles, and contains a population of 35,000, chiefly employed in the mines. Perm, with 22,000 inhabitants, is the site of the large cannon foundry of the Government. But the capital of the whole Ural district, and "the seat of the administration of the mines," is Ekaterinburg, which was founded in 1723 by Peter the Great, and now contains 32,000 inhabitants. The streets are not paved, but there are raised wooden footways for the convenience of foot-passengers. There is a public garden

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[1] "In Search of Minerals," p. 236. [2] Ibid., p. 132.

in the centre of the town, and many of the wealthy inhabitants throw open to the public their private gardens and hothouses, on which they expend vast sums. The Isset flows through the town, and supplies water power to the many factories on its banks; of which the most interesting is the Government establishment for cutting and polishing the precious stones found in the Ural. The emerald mine near Ekaterinburg was accidentally discovered by a peasant in 1830, who, in passing through a wood, spied an emerald glimmering among the roots of a fallen pine-tree. Beryls and phenocite are found in the neighbourhood of Meask and Nertschinsk. The finest beryls are of a sea-green colour, and are sometimes called *aqua marina*. Near Nertschinsk a crystal aqua marina was discovered in 1828 about nine inches long and three inches thick; and though Professor Ansted says that "these gigantic stones are of no value for jewellery,"[1] this specimen is reported to have been valued at a very high price. In 1796 a specimen of beryl was discovered in the Urals weighing $1\frac{3}{4}$ cwt.; but this has been outdone by a gigantic specimen in New England in the United States, which weighs no less than 2,900 lb., and measures four feet three inches long, and thirty-two inches across.[2]

Alexander von Humboldt, in his travels in the

[1] "In Search of Minerals," p. 72. [2] Ibid., p. 73.

Ural, expressed an opinion that diamonds might very probably exist in the country; a prophecy which was brilliantly fulfilled by the discovery of diamonds in Count Polier's gold washings on the west declivity of the Ural. The first discovered was given to Humboldt, and presented by him to the Empress of Russia.

Topazes are found in clusters among granite crystals, and vary in colour from green, blue, and yellow to white; the white are extremely beautiful, and when cut approach the diamond in effect. "Very large topazes have been found in Russia. There is a specimen in Paris weighing more than five ounces."[1] Garnets assume all sorts of colours, and each colour bears a different name: cinnamon stone, topazolite, almandine, spessartiné, aplome, melanite, carbuncle, and pyrope or fire garnet.

The black tourmalines are much worn in mourning; the pink rubellites of Shaitaury are favourite wedding ornaments. Among the species of kornuds, which in hardness come next to diamonds, the blue sapphires are the most highly prized.

From the river Ural the steppes extend towards the north on either side of the mountain range. Here the whole country bears a striking resemblance to the prairies of America.

The first herald of spring in these vast plains is

[1] "In Search of Minerals," p. 82.

the glare of the steppe fires. The steppes, like the American prairies, yield an immense crop of grass, but the Bachkirs, who inhabit the country, do not utilize it for hay to any extent. As the grass is allowed to run to seed, it grows coarse and rank, and, being borne down in winter by the weight of snow, covers the ground with a sort of felt which seriously impedes the growth of fresh vegetation.

As soon as the snow has quite disappeared and the sun and wind have dried up the last particles of moisture, the steppe is set on fire; the felt covering falls a prey to the flames, and a few days later the black, charred surface of the plain is covered with a fresh green carpet. The chief part of the population of these regions consists of the Bachkirs, who number less than a million. In the middle ages they were subject to the Khan of Kasan. In 1555, three years after the annihilation of the Tartar power on theVolga, they were conquered by the Tsar Ivan Vassilevitch; but were more or less rebellious until the year 1735, when they were finally subdued. Since that period they have submitted to a military organization, and are freed from tribute, on condition that they support an armed and trained body of 15,000 men. For the purpose of government they are divided into thirteen *volosts*, or cantons, with a head-man over each, who acts as judge and commands the armed contingent.

The life of the Bachkirs is partly nomad and partly

settled. In winter they remain stationary, living in miserably dirty huts, and suffer much from hunger, owing to their indolent habits, which make them leave their fields untilled. The horses are left free to get food for themselves, even when the ground is covered with snow; and practice and necessity have made them ingenious in clearing away the snow and getting at the grass beneath. In the spring a start is made for the steppe, with the family, the cattle, and the household goods; the young people driving the cattle; the *kibitzkas* carrying the old, the women, and the children. At night the tents are pitched, the foals and calves tied up, the cows milked, and the horses set free to feed on the steppe. In the early morning the women are stirring, to milk the cows and do the household work; and later on appear the men, whose first act is to take their morning draught of kumyss. And so the summer passes away; and with it the opportunity, which they are too indolent to seize, of making hay. In the autumn they return to their winter home most reluctantly, to lead for some months a settled life.

The men wear a garment of sheep's wool, with a leathern girdle, and two immense pockets, in one of which is carried a knife, a pointed hat trimmed with fur, and boots of skin, oftentimes much out of repair. The married women are distinguished from the girls by their kaschman, a head-dress set with pearls, gold

and silver, over which they wear a pointed cap. The wife holds a position little superior to that of a slave, doing her husband's bidding, while he sits idle; and liable to be ill-used, or divorced, if she prove disobedient or careless. The Bachkirs are very hospitable, the poorest even receiving a stranger kindly, and providing him with the best entertainment in his power, which generally consists of a newly-slaughtered sheep and tea.

Among the Bachkirs, as among other Mahometans, the Mollahs, or clergy, exercise great influence. Educated in a religious Mahometan school, taught to read and write the Tartar language, and having learned by heart the contents of the "Awtiak," an Arabic book of prayers, the mollah is appointed to his office by the villagers.

On the river Ural is found also a branch of the Cossack race, which was transported hither by the Government, partly as settlers, and partly as guards of the frontier. These Cossacks are under the government of a Hetman, who resides in the capital, Uralk, a fortified town, situated on a height on the right side of the river Ural, and possessing five churches and a bazaar. The inhabitants carry on an active trade in caviare, fish, vegetables, and fruit. As the soil and climate are not favourable to the growth of corn, and cattle breeding is not a congenial occupation, the men betake themselves chiefly to fishing, while the women cultivate the fields. The right

of fishing in the river Ural and the Caspian Sea, within a district seventy miles long and fifty miles wide, has been secured to them by the Government.

The scenery of the Urals is not grand but pretty. The great highway from Perm, which crosses them, is a good hard road, and allows the traveller to journey without being jolted, a thing which too frequently happens on the causeways of logs in other parts of the Ural and of Russia.[1] The highway is furnished with better post-houses than are generally found in the interior of Russia; and the peasantry vie with each other in helping the traveller and supplying his needs.

THE URAL MOUNTAINS.

[1] Ivan at Home," p. 226.

CHAPTER XX.

SIBERIA.

Extent—Conquest of by Russians—Population—Mountains—Rivers—Roads, Railways, Trade-routes, and Telegraphs—The Fauna—Mines—Agriculture—Manufactures—Trade—Climate — Exiles — The Native Races — Governments—Western Siberia—Eastern Siberia.

SIBERIA comprises all the northern part of Asia, and lies between the 42nd and 77th parallels of north latitude, and between the 60th degree of east and 170th degree of west longitude, containing an area of 4,826,287 square miles. There are no trustworthy accounts of the country prior to the year 1558, when the Strogonofs, a family of wealthy merchants, started a trade by barter with the Tartar tribes who lived to the east of the "mountain girdle," the Urals; and obtained from the Tsar Ivan a grant of the desert districts of the Kama, great trade privileges, and power to erect fortresses against the Siberian robbers, and to levy troops at their own expense. One of the brigand chiefs of the Cossacks of the Don, Yermak Timofievitch, who had been sentenced to death for pillage, but had been subsequently pardoned by the

Tsar, took service with the Strogonofs; and in 1581, at the head of 850 men, "Russians, Cossacks, Tartars, German and Polish prisoners of war, crossed the Urals, terrified the natives by the novelty of firearms, traversed the immense untrodden forests of Tobol, defeated the Khan Koutchoum in many battles, took Sihi, his capital, and made his cousin Mamet Kout prisoner. Then he subjugated the banks of the Irtish and the Obi; and having thrown open the communication with the rich Bokhara, one day in the year 1584 allowed himself to be surprised by his enemies, and sank in trying to swim the Irtish from the weight of the cuirass given him by the Tsar. This rival of Pizarro and Cortez, the *conquistador* of a new world, was reckoned a hero by the people, and is honoured as a saint by the church. Miracles were accomplished at his tomb, epic songs celebrated his exploits."[1] The last years of the Tsar Ivan were consoled with the news that he was the pioneer to a new kingdom, into which bishops and priests were at once sent to anoint the new subjects to the faith in Christ.

The stream of conquest now flowed onward fast: and in about fifty years the conquest of the remainder

[1] Rambaud. "History of Russia," translated by Mrs. Laing, vol. i., p. 297. For a fuller account of this hero's exploits see "Frozen Asia," pp. 121-128.

of Siberia was accomplished. In the present century the southern frontier has been extended, and the Kirghiz steppes and the island of Saghalien have been annexed.

According to the last official census, in 1873, Siberia had a population of nearly three millions and a half. The Arctic Ocean, which bathes its northern shores, is navigable only in the short summer months ; and in the south, chains of lofty mountains and vast deserts separate it from the more fertile and thickly populated countries of Asia. The only really practicable access to it from Europe is across the Ural, by the road trodden long ago by the Asiatic invaders.

The principal mountain chains of Siberia are, the Altai, which extends from the sources of the rivers Ishim and Tobol, through the southern portions of the governments of Tobolsk and Tomsk to the Yenesei ; and the Sagan range, which continues from the Yenesei to Lake Baikal, and thence, in a northerly direction, under the name of the Yablonnoi and Stanovoi mountains, as far as Behring's Straits and into Kamschatka.

The country is intersected by three great rivers ; the Obi, running a course of nearly 2,000 miles ; the Yenesei, with its affluent the Angara, in length nearly 3,400 miles ; and the Lena, about 2,700 miles. All three empty themselves into the Arctic Ocean, and

these, as well as the smaller rivers, "are so full of fish that the natives try to avoid taking a heavy haul, so frequently are their nets broken by the abundance of the draught."[1] The Amoor, a fourth large river, forms a part of the southern boundary. It rises in the Altai mountains, and after running in an easterly direction for 2,280 miles, flows into the Gulf of Tartary. "It abounds in fish, among which are the salmon, sturgeon, dolphin, trout, and others known by the names of Sazan, Karass, and a white fish called Siug."[2] The river systems of Siberia are of the very greatest importance in developing the resources of the country; for though post-roads exist everywhere, of which the chief is the highway to China, it is by river navigation that a very large proportion of the articles of commerce are carried.

The principal trade route runs from Ekaterinburg by Tiumen. A railway already exists from Perm, on the western side of the Urals, to Ekaterinburg, and the journey between these two stations is made in twenty-four hours. Towards the latter end of 1880 the first sod was cut of a railway which is to connect Ekaterinburg with Tiumen, situated on an affluent of the river Irtish; and it is intended that a line of steamers shall ply between Tiumen and Lake

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[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review* (Rev. H. Lansdell), 1880, p. 562.

[2] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 569.

Dzaisan in China; thus connecting Tobolsk, Omsk, Semipalatinsk, and Oust-Kamengorst with Europe, and quickening the means of transit between China and European Russia.[1]

The trade route from Tiumen to Irkutsk runs through Ishim, Tomah and Krasnojarsk. The goods destined for the northern portions of Siberia are conveyed from Irkutsk overland, a distance of about 140 miles, to the Lena, and are thence transported by water; or, in the winter, when water communication is no longer available, by means of reindeer and dog sledges, to the far north and east. The merchandise for the Trans-Baikal districts goes from Irkutsk, across Lake Baikal, and thence overland to Kiakhta, Nertchinsk, and to the Amoor.

The successful exploring expedition of Professor Nordenskiöld, of which news was received in 1880, has proved that a vessel may pass from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, in a specially favourable year, along the coast of Siberia; but it is not likely that this route will ever be used for commercial purposes.

Telegraphic communication is established to Kiakhta, and thence through Mongolia to Pekin; and also through Siberia to the mouths of the Amoor.

Siberia is inhabited by thirty nations or tribes;

[1] The *Globe* newspaper, September 15, 1880.

and only a small portion of the country, "a narrow slip of land on either side of the principal land and water-ways," is settled with Russians;[1] "and, as the aborigines do not generally follow agriculture, it will be seen that the narrow strip represents the greater part of the country under cultivation." The natives devote themselves to fishing, to the rearing of cattle and reindeer, and to hunting the fur-bearing animals, of which Siberia produces, next to America, the largest quantity of any country in the world. The brown bear, the wolverene, the badger, the pole-cat, the ermine, and the common otter, are found throughout the country from the south to the north; the sea-otter inhabits the coasts of Kamschatka; the fox, the wolf, and the lynx abound in the forest regions; and the hare, the squirrel, and the beaver are also plentiful. The musk-deer is to be seen in the valleys and forests between Lake Baikal and the Altai mountains; the argali in the highest grounds of the south; the elk in the northern regions; the reindeer in its wild state only within the arctic circle; and the polar bear and arctic fox along the shores of the frozen ocean, northward of the forest limit.[2] Wild horses roam in the southern steppes; the wild ass, whose hide makes very fine leather, near to the Irtish;

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[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 558.
[2] "Frozen Asia," pp. 60–63.

and tigers are not unfrequently seen in the Altai mountains.

It has already been stated that the Ural mines are on the eastern slope of the mountains, and really in Siberia. Two other districts contain mines, which, if not equal to the Urals in richness, produce enormous quantities of metals. In the western extremity of the Altai mountains are the mines of Kolyvan, opened by the Demidofs in 1742, and rich in precious metals; the silver mine of Zméof, or Zmeinogorsk, of which the principal vein runs through a length of several hundred fathoms and to a depth of 96 fathoms; and the mine of Zyrianofsk, which produces copper and lead. On the Yenesei and the Lena there are gold workings; and in a chain of hills to the west of Zméof, is the copper mine of Loftiesk, opened before the year 1782, but not so productive now as formerly. A few other lead and silver mines are worked on the banks of the Tscharish and on the nether flank of the Altai mountains. Mr. Lansdell states, "that he could get no satisfactory evidence that there is such a thing as a quicksilver mine in Siberia at all."[1]

In Daouria, the great mountainous region which extends from the Baikal lake to the eastern ocean, are mines of silver, lead, and iron, some of which

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 563.

were worked by the Chinese before they were expelled from the country, and small mines of copper and arsenical pyrites, and in the mountain of Odon Tchelon there are veins and cavities of ferrugineous clay running through the granite, from which emeralds, topazes, aqua-marines, and other precious stones have been extracted.

It has already been stated that agriculture is pursued mainly, if not solely, by the Russian population. In the more thickly inhabited districts sufficient corn, chiefly barley, oats, and buckwheat, is grown to supply the wants of the people; and in the less fertile parts large quantities of rye are produced. In the western districts of Tobolsk, wild nettles are abundant; and from the fibres of this plant the Ostiaks weave a species of cloth resembling linen. Strawberries, raspberries, currants, and cherries, and many other kinds of wild fruits are found in the woods, and the small-fruited Chinese apple grows in the Trans-Baikal districts.

The manufacturing industries of Siberia are being developed, but somewhat slowly. Rails, cloth, cotton-goods, paper, and steamboats are now made in the country; and the thirty steamboats on the rivers, the same number that were on the Volga and Kama only seventeen years ago,[1] show that the carrying trade is

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 326.

making progress. Still, a large quantity of manufactured goods continues to be imported, not only for home consumption but for transport to the neighbouring countries of Turkistan and China. These are purchased wholesale at the great fairs of Irbitsch and Nijni-Novgorod, and even in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and are sent to central points—Tiumen, Tobolsk, and Tomsk, for South Siberia, and Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk for East Siberia—where the small retail dealers and pedlers obtain their supplies for the outlying districts. At the small local fairs dealings are conducted by barter, and native products are taken in exchange for imported goods.

A considerable trade is carried on with the Kirghiz and other native tribes in furs and skins, which are collected at certain centres and forwarded to China by way of Kiakhta, to Khiva, and Bokhara by caravans, and to Europe. The trade in tea with China was formerly immense, but since the duty has been taken off the tea borne by sea, it has considerably diminished.[1]

In the whole of the districts lying north of the 55th degree of north latitude, the climate is very severe. Up to the 66th degree the country is covered with vast forests of fir and birch; thence to the Arctic Ocean extend the *tundras*, sterile morasses

[1] "A Trip up the Volga," p. 54.

and swamps, covered with ice and snow for about nine months in the year, and during the remaining three producing only mosses, lichens, and low creeping plants, such as the wortle and cranberry. Even at Tobolsk, where the cold is not nearly so severe as in the eastern parts of the country, the mean temperature in January is three degrees[1] below zero of Fahrenheit, and furs have to be worn indoors. The few Ostiak tribes which inhabit this desolate region have a hard time of it.

South of the 55th degree, especially in the western steppes, and between the rivers Irtish and Obi, the climate is less severe, the winter not so long, and the spring and summer are sufficiently sunny to allow of agricultural pursuits being carried on with success.

The government of Tobolsk used to be the final destination of the prisoners exiled to Siberia; prisoners do not remain there now, but are sent after a short detention to mines and prisons further east. In former years those condemned to exile were collected at St. Petersburg, Nijni-Novgorod, Moscow, and other centres, and dispatched on foot the whole distance; large wooden barracks being provided at distances of twelve to sixteen miles along the road, where they were lodged at night. As months were necessarily occupied in the journey, numbers died

[1] Keith Johnston's "Gazetteer."

by the way from exhaustion and fatigue. But of late years the Government has arranged that prisoners of all classes shall be carried by steamer to Perm, and by railway to Ekaterinburg, and thence by covered carts to the central prison at Tiumen, and even as far as Irkutsk.

There are two classes of exiles, the political offenders and the criminal. The political offenders are punished generally by no other penalty than that of exile ; they are allowed to reside within certain distances of a central point, in or near villages whose population does not exceed 200 souls, and to enter, if they are so minded, into the employment of the Government. Mr. Herbert Barry gives it as his own conviction, after travelling in Siberia, and as the conviction of men honest in their opinion and well able to judge, that there is "not one instance of a political exile, properly so called, working in the mines, or doing any other kind of forced work ; and that, if you go into the case, you will find that some, called political exiles, although they may have been mixed up in some way with politics, have been sent to Siberia for some crime quite distinct from politics."[1] It is to these political exiles that Mr. Herbert Barry thinks the credit is due of making the peasants in Siberia more civilized and better educated than in

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 327.

other parts of the Empire. "The political exiles who, from time to time, have been sent from the centres of civilization to live amongst them, having no business or employment to occupy them, passed away their weary days in the laudable occupation of teaching the peasants' children to read and write."[1] And as they are permitted, if they are able, to live at their own expense, and to have their families with them, the humanizing influence upon the peasantry is greatly increased by constant intercourse with the educated class.

But the chief penalty of exile to Siberia is the loss of civil rights. An exile is prohibited from engaging in any commercial or industrial pursuit, except agriculture, and is civilly dead. Even if he is ultimately pardoned, he does not recover his civil rights to the full, nor even any portion of them, until a long probation has been endured.

Of the criminal classes, the worst are sent to work in the mines; others to the fortresses; others to the Government factories; and others again are collected into colonies, placed at some miles apart, under the surveillance of a troop of soldiers, where they eke out their livelihood by working for the Government or for some exile richer than themselves. Capital punishment, save for the very gravest offences where

[1] "Ivan at Home," p. 232.

politics and crime are mixed up together, has been abolished in the Empire, and the severe labour of the mines has replaced it. It is hard to reconcile the contradictory statements, made by those who claim to know the facts of the case, on the condition of those condemned to the mines. The author of "The Russians of To-day" says, "It must be always understood that a sentence of Siberian hard labour means death. The Russian Government well knows that to live for years in the atrocious torture of the mines is humanly impossible."[1] Mr. Herbert Barry, on the contrary, says, "As those who work in the mines are the worst of criminals, and as the work in the mines is not particularly hard nor injurious to health, they may be considered to be a good deal better off than they deserve to be; moreover, all the people working in the mines now live above ground."[2] And the author of the two interesting letters on Siberia and Siberian Prisons, published in *The Times* on the 20th and the 22nd of April, 1880, concludes with this remark: "I can only say, after going through half their largest prisons, that I left Asia with the impression that if a prisoner chooses to behave decently well, he may be in Siberia more comfortable than in many, and as comfortable as in most, of the prisons of the world." In another place

[1] P. 231.

[2] "Russia in 1870," p. 335.

he states:[1] "The period of an exile's life spent at the mines before being set free to colonize, cannot but be hard. Whatever laxity of discipline may prevail, as compared with the prisons of other countries, the herding together of the worst of characters, the deprivation of social, intellectual, and religious privileges, to speak of nothing else, must make life in the mines, from the nature of things, a burden. But this is a very different thing from killing men by inches in sulphur fumes, as is commonly supposed."

Of the native population of Siberia, the Samoyedes, numbered amongst the human family under the head of Hyperborean Mongolidæ, of whom tribes are settled on the west of the Urals in the government of Archangel, extend along the shores of the Frozen Ocean as far as the Lena. They resemble in appearance, habits, manners, and dress their brethren in European Russia, and live chiefly by hunting and fishing, the salmon of the rivers and the wild reindeer of the plains affording them abundant supplies of food. "To the Samoyede the reindeer is everything. When alive the animal draws his sledge, and when dead the skin is used for tent and clothing."[2]

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 565.

[2] "Frozen Asia," p. 211. As the native tribes are so fully described in this book, it has been considered sufficient to give here a brief sketch of each.

Attempts have been made to Christianize them; but their migratory habits, and the numerous dialects of their language, render the work difficult. The religion of those who have not embraced Christianity is Shamanism, so called from the priestly class, the Shamans, who claim to hold communion with the spirit-gods, and at certain fixed periods offer up sacrifices, and who also act as medicine-men. The office descends from father to son; the father selecting the most shrewd and clever of his children, and instructing him in the duties of his office; or if childless, adopting an heir. The dress of the Shaman when he is officiating is covered with the bones and teeth of sea animals, the claws and bones and wings of owls, and buttons, metal rings, keys, and beads; anything which imparts terror to his appearance. In his hands he carries as signs of his office a clapper and a tambourine, covered with symbolical hieroglyphics, in which his power is considered to be concentrated; and the wildness of his gestures and distortions of his body are sufficient to impress the bystanders with the idea that he is possessed by spirits.

More to the south and east of the Ural Mountains, are the Ostiaks, "a portion of the Ugrian branch of the Turanian stock,"[1] who inhabit the

[1] "Frozen Asia," p. 138.

valley of the Obi, and roam as far as the Yenesei. Like the Samoyedes they live by hunting and fishing; and dwell in huts of a square form usually sunk below the ground, with an aperture in the roof by which the smoke may escape. Their religion is Shamanism; "but many have been baptized into the Russian Church, and a school has been opened for them and the Samoyedes on the Lower Obi at Obdorsk."[1] Their clothing is made chiefly from reindeer skins; and men and women dress so much alike that it would be difficult to distinguish the sex of an individual were it not for the veil with which the women are covered.

"Music of a rude kind and even poetry, are known to this wild race, whose improvised songs are very striking, owing to the pantomimic skill with which they portray any incident in the narrative. . . . . Their songs, which are, however, monotonous, are accompanied by two instruments, one of five strings and the other of eight." . . . . The honesty of the Ostiaks is proverbial throughout Siberia."[2]

The Voguls, also, "a portion of the Ugrian branch of the Turanian stock,"[3] are neighbours of the Ostiaks, and like them fishers and hunters. They roam through a district extending from the Urals

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 561.
[2] "Frozen Asia," p. 152. [3] Ibid., p. 136.

eastward as far as the Irtish and Tobol. They never allow more than five huts to be erected in one encampment, nor one encampment to be nearer than ten miles to another, lest the smoke should disturb the game. They are Shamanists in religion, and the Russian Church has not succeeded in converting many of them to Christianity. Their wealth consists in large herds of reindeer, which they use for food and for dragging their sledges, but do not utilize for clothing, as they mostly adopt the Russian dress.

To the south of the Voguls are the Kirghiz, who are spread over a large part of Central Asia, of whom a description will be found in the chapter on Central Asia.

In the neighbourhood of Lake Baikal are the Buriates, a Mongolian race resembling the Chinese in appearance and in religion, the greater portion of them are Buddhists, some few Shamanists, and a few thousand lukewarm Christians. Though partially civilized they lead a nomad life, and live by hunting fur-bearing animals and by agriculture.

The Tungooses, a nomadic race of the great Turanian stock, wander over the mountain regions which extend from Lake Baikal to the Sea of Okhotsk, the regions watered by the Lena, the Indigirka, and the Thetzma rivers, and even on the tundras near the sea-coast. "They are called by the Russians the Dog, the Horse, and the Rein-

deer Tungooses, according to their different habits."[1] They wear a dress resembling that worn by the Ostiaks, and live in tents formed of a few poles in the form of a cone, covered with reindeer skins. "Two qualities characterize this race, honesty and wilful improvidence."[2]

Offshoots from this race, the Gilyaks, also nomads, are found on the Amoor. Though a few of them have been baptized into the Russian Church, they are mostly Shamanists, and very superstitious. "They make rough idols of wood, which they use at their ceremonies and wear in sickness about their persons as charms," and only call in the aid of the Shaman when they have something to get or to fear, as in sickness or at death.[3] The Gilyak habitations are generally erected on posts, several feet above the ground, and surrounded by a platform which affords a convenient receptacle for sledges, nets, and other lumber; a rude ladder, formed by cutting notches in a log, leads to the dwelling.[4] Murder is common among them. They purchase their wives and practise polygamy. They are supposed to be dying out.

The Goldi, another tribe on the Amoor, are said to

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[1] "Frozen Asia," p. 168. [2] Ibid., p. 170.
[3] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 573.
[4] "Frozen Asia," p. 184.

be slightly increasing in numbers. Like the Gilyaks they have two or more wives, whom they obtain by purchase. "The Russians have two mission schools on the Lower Amoor, attended by thirty children; one for the Goldi in Troitzka, and another for the Gilyaks at Bolan. The priest in charge had in twenty-three years baptized more than 2,000 heathens."[1]

The Yakuts are supposed to be a portion of the Turkish branch of the Turanian stock; and inhabit a territory lying between the Yenesei on the west and the Kolyma on the east. In dress and in the construction of their huts they resemble the Ostiaks. They keep cattle and horses; cattle for the sake of the milk and for riding purposes, and horses for food. Ermann[2] describes them to be extraordinarily clean though inferior to the Buriates in civilization; with a knowledge of working metals; and as "having the appearance rather of a people who have grown wild than of a thoroughly and originally rude race." They are Christians; and are good-tempered, orderly, and hospitable.

In the furthest corner of the country, on the triangular piece of territory, bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the east by the Kamschatkan

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[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 574.
[2] "Frozen Asia," p. 188.

Sea, and on the west by the Kolyma, there are the Tchouktchis and the Koriaks, "classed by Pritchard as a particular group of the human family under the name of Ichthyophagi, or Fish-eating Tribe,"[1] who are almost identical in their manners and customs. They have preserved their independence, and rarely come in contact with their Russian masters except at the fair of Ostrownoje, when they meet for barter and trade. They wander from place to place, when their means of subsistence fails, and dwell in huts or *jurtas*, where neither light nor much fresh air can penetrate, and the atmosphere is abominably foul. The Shamans have unbounded influence over these tribes, and polygamy prevails amongst them; a well-to-do Tchouktchi having five or six wives. Not only do they kill deformed children and infirm old men and women, but the most revered chief will put an end to his existence with stern stoicism as soon as he finds himself in danger of becoming a burden to his people.

On the river Anyui are settled the Yakagires, a little known race, which constant wars with the Tchouktchis have reduced to a very small number. The reindeer, which they kill in autumn and spring, supply them with food for the whole year; tobacco and brandy, which they purchase from the Russian

[1] "Frozen Asia," p. 195.

settlements in the neighbourhood, are their chief luxuries.

The Kamschatdales, the inhabitants of Kamschatka, have been nearly extinguished by Russian ill-usage, by the use of spirits, and by disease. The few that remain are nominally members of the Russian Church; and live in wide-scattered villages, gaining a subsistence by trapping, fishing, and the cultivation of vegetables and rye.

The native tribes of Siberia are sharing the universal lot of savages who come in contact with civilization, a more or less rapid extermination. Of late years the Russian Government has tried to protect them from the exactions of the officials and of the settlers. But if in European Russia it was said, "God is high and the Tsar is far," this can be said more truly in Asiatic Russia; and through the action of unscrupulous officials, settlers, and traders, the aboriginal races of Siberia will ultimately perish.

It must be mentioned that an annual tax payable in furs is imposed by the Government upon these native tribes. It amounts to about five shillings and sixpence for each male between the ages of fifteen and sixty.

For the purposes of government Siberia is divided into two vice-royalties: Western Siberia, which consists of the government of Tobolsk and Tomsk; and Eastern Siberia, divided into the governments of

Irkutsk, Yeneseisk, Yakutsk, Trans-Baikal, Amoor, and the maritime region next the Sea of Japan, including the island of Saghalien.

The Russian population, which has spread over the land, consists partly of colonists and partly of "Siberiaks," or "people who have Russian or Polish blood in their veins, and have fair hair and broad faces and prominent cheek-bones, and are a frugal, energetic, and hospitable people, though cunning and addicted to drink. They are for the most part the descendants of exiles, of whom till recently about twelve thousand were sent every year to Siberia for political or other offences."[1] With a view to political and commercial objects, the Russian Government has attempted to people Siberia with Russian colonists. At the beginning of the present century small parties, consisting of four or five families, were set down at selected points, with everything requisite for the establishment of a colony; and the unmarried men were provided by the police with wives chosen from amongst the women exiled for lesser crimes. But the attempt failed; more than half perished, and a large number migrated to the districts of the Amoor and Yakutsk. The severe climate of the north, the short but hot summer, and the scanty

[1] "Geography, Physical, Historical, and Descriptive." Keith Johnston, p. 281.

vegetation, reduced the few who remained to the most terrible straits. In the neighbourhood of the dreary little town of Turukhansk, which lies a short distance outside the Arctic circle, the Russian population has become stunted in stature, scrofulous, and apathetic to such a degree that a crime of violence is a thing of the rarest occurrence among them. The old Believers from Lake Baikal, who were settled in the north within the last fifty years, have almost all perished from scurvy, typhus, or starvation.

The town of Tobolsk, the capital of the government of that name, stands on a hill, and is surrounded with a brick wall. It has a cathedral, and a number of other churches, and is the seat of an archbishop. The climate is so severe that mercury is sometimes frozen. The mean temperature in January is 3°4′ below zero and of July 67° 5′ Fahrenheit. Another principal town is Tiumen, which is the point of junction of several great routes, and the centre of a large trade, especially of the trade between Russia and China.

The capital of the government of Tomsk is Tomsk, a town built mostly of wood. Barnaul, in the same government, is the centre of a mining district. Mr. Lansdell[1] describes the country between these two towns "as singularly rich and productive. Here are to be seen the white-barked birch, the

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 562.

cedar-nut tree, the Scotch fir, flowering acacia, the alder, pine, willow, and white-flowering cheromeka. Among the shrubs we noticed wild currants. There were likewise raspberry and strawberry plants." But, except along the banks of the rivers, these two governments have little land suited for agricultural purposes. Tobolsk has an area of 531,960 square miles, and a population of 1,086,848; Tomsk, an area of 329,024 square miles, and a population of 838,676.

The government of Irkutsk has an area of 309,176 square miles, and a population of 378,244. A large portion of its surface is covered with forests; and the climate is too cold for the growth of any grain except barley and rye. Irkutsk, the capital of East Siberia, the see of an archbishop, and the residence of the governor-general of the province, is situated at the confluence of the Lower Angara with the Irkut, and has a population of 27,430. The town, which is built chiefly of wood, is fortified and defended by a citadel; and the broad streets, though unpaved, are clean, owing to the great hardness of the ground. Of the thirty-three churches, twelve are of stone, the rest of wood. It possesses a gymnasium, schools, a medical college, and an ecclesiastical seminary; and instruction is given in the Tartar, Chinese, and Japanese languages, to fit its inhabitants for the trade with China and

the East, of which it is the centre. The winter here, though severe, is comparatively short; but as the town is situated 1,240 feet above sea level, and in such a high latitude, the mean temperature is low, 31° 1′ Fahrenheit; the mean of December, January, and February being 1° 3′ below zero.

The government of Yeneseisk has an area of 92,832 miles, with a population of 72,862, consisting chiefly of the native tribes, and of the workers in the mines and gold washings, which are richer here than in any other part of Eastern Russian Asia.

The government of Yakutsk comprises an area of 1,517,063 square miles, with a population of 231,977, mainly of Yakuts. It is hilly in the south, but is in the north an immense level plain; of which the larger part is a bare frozen desert. But though this is its general character, in a few more fertile parts large herds of cattle are reared, and rye and barley are grown. The climate is most severe. The wealth of the province consists in cattle, fisheries, iron, salt, and talc, but mainly in furs and walrus' teeth.

Yakutsk, the capital, situated on the river Lena, has a population of 5,665, half of whom are Russians, and the rest Yakuts. It was founded about 230 years ago by the Yenesei Cossacks, and now consists of about 400 wooden dwellings of one storey, with seven churches, also of wood. Here a large fair takes place annually, in which merchants from Irkutsk, and

other western parts, purchase furs and ivory to a large extent. The mean annual temperature is 13° 5′; the mean in January 36° 3′ below zero; and in July 61° 7′ Fahrenheit.[1]

The road from Irkutsk to the government of Trans-Baikal and Kiakhta passes by the Lake Baikal, which lies about 1,280 feet above the sea, and is about 400 miles in length, and from 20 to 70 in breadth, with an area of 13,487 square miles. It contains several islands. The rocky shore goes down sheer into the lake, which never overflows its banks; and is highest, not in the spring, when the snow melts, but, singularly enough, in autumn. Navigation on Lake Baikal is dangerous, partly from the want of proper anchorage, partly from its unequal depth—sand-banks and shallows occurring alongside the deepest water—and also, it is said, from subterranean disturbances, caused probably by volcanic action, which raise high waves at one spot, while calm prevails at others. Situated in a mountainous country, it receives several large rivers and many streams; but the only outlet is the large and rapid river Angara, an affluent of the Yenesei. The fisheries of the lake are very valuable, and the most prized fish is the *Omul*, a sort of herring, which is taken in large quantities in August and September.

The government of Trans-Baikal, east of lake

[1] Keith Johnston.

Baikal, and having for its boundary on the south-east Mongolia and the Chinese Empire, has an area of 251,963 square miles, and a population of 430,780. The chief wealth of the district is in minerals, and the breeding of cattle is carried on to a great extent. Chitor is the capital; but the most important town is Kiakhta, the great emporium of trade between China and Russia, which contains 4,286 inhabitants. It consists of a fortified town, Troitzkossawsk, inhabited by the governor and his officials; and of the suburb, Kiakhta, the residence of the merchants. At a large fair, held in December, a great trade is still done; but since the restrictions on the importation of tea into Russia by sea have been removed, the dealings have been very considerably reduced. Kiakhta is situated 2,200 feet above the level of the sea, and is surrounded by fine woods and sand hills; the buildings are arranged round three sides of a parallelogram, of which the fourth side forms the boundary of the neutral ground between the Russian and the Chinese Empires. A few hundred paces beyond this boundary lies the little Chinese town of Mai-ma-tchin, enclosed by a palisade, and inhabited by about 6,000 men, no women being permitted to reside within it.

Great Nertchinsk is the centre of mines of silver, gold, copper, and iron in the Trans-Baikal. East of this, on the Shilka, is Kara, "a penal colony of 2,000

convicts condemned to hard labour in the gold mines;"[1] of which, at the time of Mr. Lansdell's visit, 800 were murderers, 400 were robbers, and 700 vagrants or vagabonds. Mr. Lansdell says, "there are also a few political prisoners, but only a few; though I was told that Kara is the place to which such exiles, when condemned to hard labour, are usually sent. After seeing all but two of the principal prisons and penal colonies of Siberia, I came to the conclusion that the number of political prisoners commonly said to be deported there is largely in excess of facts. I went to the mines and saw the men at their work, which is all done on the surface, and which resembled the labour of navvies when making a cutting, stones and earth having to be carted away, and put into a machine to be washed." The hours of labour are thirteen, inclusive of the two hours allowed for meals; and "the food allowed is nearly double in weight to that which is given to a convict in England."

To the east of the Trans-Baikal is the government of the Amoor, of which the capital is Blagovetschensk, so thinly inhabited that it has a population of only 25,204, in an area of 173,556 square miles. A Cossack colony, Albazin, had been founded here so early as 1650, which, after several years of desultory warfare,

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 565.

was relinquished; and it was not until the year 1850 that the Russians recommenced colonizing, and founded, so called, Cossack settlements in different points of the river Amoor. "When the Amoor came into the hands of the Russians," says Mr. Lansdell, "General Muravief took many of the children of convicts, called them Cossacks, and placed them in stations, ten miles apart, all along the Amoor, and gave them land, seed, cows, horses, and general farming stock for a year, after which they were expected to take care of themselves."[1]

The river Amoor runs a course of 1,780 miles, with a fall of 2,000 feet: its affluent, the Amgun, is in length 1,288 miles, and falls, from its source to the point of junction at Ust Strelka, 4,000 feet. The area drained by the Amoor and its tributaries is 766,000 square miles. Mr. Lansdell, from whom these details are taken, states the total cereal produce of the district between Khabarofka and Nikolaefsk in 1879 to have been 3,276 tons of grain and 811 tons of potatoes; and adds that he was told that though the summer only lasts four months and a half, "with more energy and capital an immense quantity of rye might be cultivated."[2]

The Russian Minister of War, in 1880, ordered

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[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 577.
[2] Ibid., p. 567.

large forts to be constructed, by the labour of the colonists, at Blagovetschensk and at the junctions of the Sungari and of the Ussuri with the Amoor; and an entrenched camp to be established at the confluence of the Ussuri with the Amoor, in which the Ural Cossacks, now on their way to the frontier, will be settled.[1]

The maritime region, in Russian Primorsk, extends southward from the Arctic Ocean in 70° N. to the river Toumen in 50° 10′ N., a distance of 2,760 miles, and varies in breadth from 25 to 750 miles; and in an area of 731,910 square miles has a population of 45,000 only. It includes Kamschatka and the island of Saghalien, and skirts the seas of Behring, Okhotsk, and Japan. The capital is Nikolaefsk, situated on the left bank of the Amoor, twenty-five miles from its mouth. The river here is a mile and three-quarters wide, and in some places fifteen feet deep. Below the town it is difficult of navigation owing to the sand-banks, "and the bar at the mouth of the river prevents the entrance of ships drawing more than thirteen feet of water."[2] Nikolaefsk was formerly the naval station of the Siberian fleet, and the chief Russian port on the Pacific. The population is about 3,500, but the

[1] The *Globe* newspaper, 15th September, 1880.
[2] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 568.

trade is comparatively small. "There is a prison used as a depôt for convicts on their way to Saghalien."[1]

Vladivostock, "the command of the East," as its name implies, is now the naval station; it is 1,200 miles lower down the coast than Nikolaefsk, and is situated on an inlet called the Golden Horn. In the south of the country ceded by China in 1860, between the river Ussuri and the sea, there is a safe and capacious harbour with "anchorage for sixty or seventy men-of-war and two hundred merchantmen. It is free from ice during ten months of the year. The town stretches along the shore of the bay, and is practically composed of a single long street running north and south. The houses, which are all of wood, are not too numerous, and any increase to the small fixed population creates a house famine at once. The officers belonging to the reinforcements recently sent to Vladivostock have managed with some difficulty to get themselves lodged, but the privates are obliged to bivouac in tents outside the town. Provisions, which are brought from Corea and Manchuria, are dear. The officers have started a club,—there is also a public garden, where a band plays twice a week; but with all these attractions Vladivostock remains a somewhat dreary locality."[2]

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 570.

[2] Quoted by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 15th September, 1880, from a Cronstadt paper.

It has a population of 5,000, and a considerable trade carried on by 80 merchants of the first guild, 185 of the second, and 228 temporary merchants ;" [1] and it is surrounded by a district rich in minerals and productive of potatoes and corn.

Kamschatka has a population of 6,500 in a area of 1,042,550 square miles. The scenery is both wild and strange. Innumerable rivers and streams, flowing between high steep banks, traverse the country in all directions ; hot springs gush out of the rocks, and flow in rapid torrents; some throwing into the air jets of hot water and steam, others hissing and boiling in huge natural cauldrons. A range of mountains traverses the country right through its centre, which towards the south are clothed with forests at their base and at a higher level with stunted shrubs ; but above the height of 5,000 feet they are covered with perpetual snow. There are in the range twenty-one volcanoes varying in height from 7,000 to nearly 16,000 feet, and most of them in a constant state of activity.

The climate is frightfully cold and dismal ; winter lasting nine months, while the summer is not free from frosts. The sky is darkened for months together by thick mists and heavy, drifting clouds.

Kamschatka was discovered and conquered by

[1] "Through Siberia." *Contemporary Review*, 1880, p. 580.

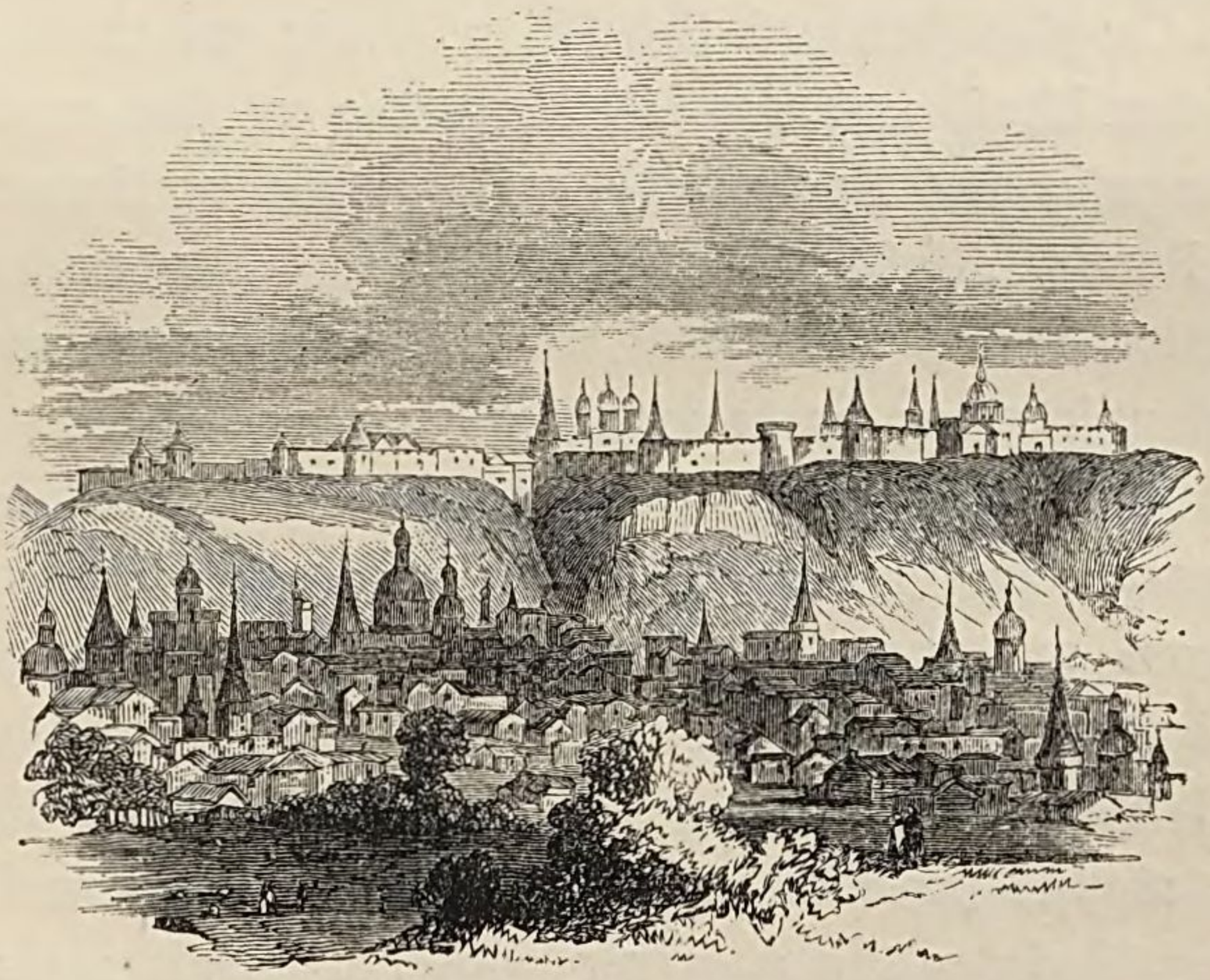
the Russians towards the close of the 17th century. Though so thinly populated it exports sable, fox, and other skins, as well as whale oil ; and in the pursuit of these and in fishing the inhabitants are chiefly employed. It is fabulously rich in fish. Captain Kennan states: "Dozens of small streams which we passed, seventy miles from the sea-coast, were so choked up with thousands of dying, dead, and decayed fish (salmon) that we could not use the water for any purpose whatever. . . . . We frequently waded in and threw them out by dozens with our bare hands."[1]

The capital is Petropaulovski, on the south-east coast, once the naval station of the Pacific, now a mere village of red-roofed and bark-thatched log-houses, with a population of two or three hundred native Russian peasants, and of a few German and American merchants.

South of Kamschatka, and extending to Japan, is the chain of the Kurile islands, about twenty-five in number, of which the name is derived from their smoking volcanoes (*kuril*, to smoke), a continuation of the volcanic mountains of East Russia. The very small population live mostly by fishing and hunting ; bartering their products with the traders of various nations who put in at their ports.

[1] "Tent Life in Siberia," p. 157.

To the south of the Sea of Okhotsk lies the narrow, irregularly-shaped island of Saghalien, separated from the mainland by the Gulfs of Tartary and of the Amoor, and from Yesso by the Strait of La Pérouse. Its area is estimated at 47,000 square miles, and the population at 13,500, of which 3,000 are Russians. The Japanese have given up their claim to the northern portion, which now is held by Russia. It is inhabited by a few Russians, by Manchur Tartars, and the peculiar tribe of Ainos, people who use a dialect of the Kuriles, and are conjectured to have been the original inhabitants of the Japanese islands.



TOBOLSK.

CHAPTER XXI.

CENTRAL ASIA.

The Boundaries — The Kirghiz Steppe — The Kirghiz — The Caspian Sea—The Sea of Aral—The Transcaspian Province —Khiva—Turkestan—Natives—Administration—Products —Occupation of Inhabitants—Tashkend—Samarcand—The Town of Turkestan—Khodjen—Khokand—The Province of Semiretch—Kuldja—The Kara Kum—The Turcomans—The Aims of Russia—The Future of Russia.

RUSSIAN Central Asia is bounded on the west by the Caspian Sea and the River Ural; on the north by the Ural, and the Irtish rivers; on the east by Mongolia and Eastern Turkestan; and on the south by Persia, Afghanistan, and Cabul. The northern portion is the great Kirghiz steppe; a vast, stony region, in some parts flat, in others gently elevated; with here and there patches of the most fruitful soil surrounded by drifting sand, and with occasional barren salt marshes. On the shores of the lakes and rivers a carpet of grass and of flowering plants and shrubs is to be seen; but away from these the steppe presents only a grey and yellow surface, diversified by the dazzling white of a salt plain, or the dismal black of a swamp, the favourite resort

of wild horses and asses. The huge thickets of reeds, tall enough to afford a safe hiding-place to a man on horseback, harbour, not only water-fowl, but herds of wild boars, and, it is said, even tigers. In summer the heat is intense, the air parched, and mosquitoes swarm; the rivers and lakes dwindle to an insignificant size, some disappearing altogether, and water is exceedingly scarce. In winter the climate is most severe; and fierce winds drive the snow in clouds, that frequently overwhelm numbers of horses and sheep, and their owners. The Kirghiz, a nomadic tribe belonging to the Turkish race, consider the whole steppe common property, each family occupying as much of it as his flocks and herds require.

According to native tradition, a mighty khan once divided the tribe of the Kirghiz into three hordes, the great, the middle, and the small horde, and placed his three sons over them as khans. At the present time they are not officially distinguished by the names of their hordes; but their khans are confirmed in their authority by the Russian Government, and those who dwell near the frontiers of European Russia are gradually becoming Russianized. The Government has had no small difficulty in weaning the Kirghiz from "the Barantas," or plundering expeditions, which have long been a recognized institution among them, and which served

not only as an opportunity for the display of youthful valour, but as means for the enrichment of the younger sons of a family. Disguised and armed with cudgels and a kind of lasso, they would sally forth and seize all the horses and cattle that they came across; but they rarely committed murder, unless compelled by the exigencies of the situation to resort to strong measures.

The Kirghiz are divided into two classes, the nobles and the people; distinguished amongst themselves as white host and black host. In stature they seldom exceed five feet six inches; "their countenance is disagreeable, the nose sinking into the face, leaving the space between the elongated eyes without the usual dividing ridge; the brow is protuberant, the cheeks large and bloated, rendering their aspect very repulsive."[1] As a rule they are remarkably healthy and strong, and are inured to all kinds of privation.

They live in circular tents, *kibitzas*, made of felt stretched upon a round wooden frame; an opening on the side protected by a felt curtain serves for a door, and another opening in the roof for the escape of the smoke. In summer the felt sides are removed, and replaced by straw mats. Large sums are often spent on the interior decorations, which consist of carpets, silk mattresses, and some-

[1] "Frozen Asia," p. 155.

times of silver ornaments. The *kibitza* is so light that it can be carried by a single camel, and so simply constructed that it can be taken down and loaded on a camel in a very short time; according to Dr. Schuyler, in ten minutes.[1]

The Kirghiz wears, according to the weather, one or more long coats in the shape of a dressing-gown, either lined with fur or wadded, large baggy trousers, made of leather and camel's hair, and boots with pointed toes and very large heels. The men shave their heads, leaving only a forelock, and supply the place of hair with a small plush or velvet cap, frequently embroidered; over which they place, when out of doors, a conical hood or felt hat, so constructed as to turn up at the sides and form a brim. On grand occasions this gives place to a "tall steeple-crowned hat, with the brim turning up in two immense horns, made of felt, or usually of velvet, embroidered often with gold."[2] The dress of the women differs but slightly from that of the men; their hair hangs down their backs in two or three long curls; and their heads and necks are covered with loosely folded cotton veils, which are a combination of the turban of the east and the nun's whimple of the west. Both men and women wear belts on which

[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 35.
[2] Ibid., vol. i., p. 36.

they lavish care and expense, and which they adorn with silver, gold, and precious stones. The boys wear little if any clothing on their bodies, and no covering to their shaven heads; the girls dress like their mothers, with their hair cut short behind, and hanging down in numerous braids in front.

In winter the Kirghiz remain stationary; the cattle are penned in some sheltered spot, but the horses are secured in the open air. For warmth the *kibitzas* are pitched amongst reeds or brushwood, if such protection is available near the camping-ground.

The wealth of the Kirghiz is made up of three items: his horses, which are of a small but strong breed; his flocks of sheep and goats, so valuable that everything is priced at so many sheep; and his camels, which are essential for the transport of the women and children and of his property. The horses are extremely swift, and will travel thirty to fifty miles a day for days together. The sheep are large, with long, coarse wool, and enormous tails many pounds in weight, and are inured like the horses to long abstinence from food and drink. It is said that the sheep will not move from pasture to pasture except under the guidance of the goats; which are of a breed very like the goats of Thibet, and have under their hair a down, reckoned as a valuable article of trade. About a million sheep are annually sent to Russia and China;

the remainder supply their owners with milk and flesh for food, and with wool for the covering of their tents and for other purposes. The camels are mostly of the hardier, two-humped variety, and will carry burdens of five hundredweight at the rate of twenty-five to thirty-five miles a-day. Considerable numbers are exported to India and Persia. Of horned cattle, which were introduced not much more than a hundred years ago, there are not many herds.

The food of the Kirghiz is chiefly the flesh and milk of their flocks, smoked horse-hams and camel humps, and a rich cheese, *eremetchik*, made from mare's milk; but they are unacquainted with the use of bread. Their favourite drink is *koumiss*, the whey of mare's milk, and *aiaan*, a spirit distilled from *koumiss* and also from the whey of sheep's milk.

The men are employed in tending their flocks, in hunting, and in smiths' work; they manufacture the ornaments of their horses, lances, sabres, bows and arrows, axes, guns of a clumsy construction, helmets, and chain armour. The women occupy themselves in household and field work and in weaving. Racing, of a barbarous character, in summer; and the recital of tales, and the singing of songs to the accompaniment of a reed pipe and rude kind of fiddle, in winter, are the popular amusements. Few can read and scarcely any can write.

Their songs are handed on by oral tradition, and are of an imaginative poetic character, treating of their heroes and of the events of their irregular marauding expeditions. Whether these people are Mahometans or heathens it is very difficult to say. Some of them acknowledge one Supreme Being, to whom they pray, in accordance with the precepts of the Koran ; others believe in two divinities, of whom the one, *Choudai*, is benevolently disposed, whilst the other, *Shaitan*, is hostile to man. But all are excessively superstitious, and believe in the existence and influence of good and bad spirits, in magicians and soothsayers, and in lucky and unlucky days ; and, in fact, their credulity is their chief, if not sole, sentiment. "The Russians, who occupy the fortified ports and villages chiefly, are few in number ; they have divided the country into the provinces of Uralsk in the west, Turgai, Akmolinsk, and Semipalatinsk in the east, each corresponding to a fortified capital of the same name."[1]

South of the Kirghiz steppe lies a body of water, called by old chroniclers the "Chwaliskoe" Sea, from a race of men long since extinct, who once inhabited the Delta of the Volga, but now known as the Caspian. This sea, or, as it should properly be

[1] Keith Johnston. "Geography, Physical, Historical, and Descriptive," p. 282.

termed, this lake, covers an area of 178,800 square miles. Its surface is now ascertained to be eighty-four feet below that of the Black Sea, and is gradually being lowered, as it is supposed, by the excess of evaporation. The water is only slightly impregnated with salt, but has a bitter, disagreeable taste, owing to the numerous naphtha springs which well up in its bed. Peter the Great, who not only possessed considerable information concerning this inland sea, but was even aware that the Amou Daria had in former times flowed into it, despatched an expedition in 1717, under Prince Bekowitsch, to carry out the gigantic scheme of turning the waters of the river into its ancient bed, and of thus opening up a means of direct water communication with the East; but the Prince and the whole of his followers were massacred. In 1719 and 1720, Peter took possession of the whole western coast of the Caspian, and the map published by the Russian Admiralty in 1731 first showed its real configuration. The information thus made public was speedily turned to account by some enterprising English merchants, who, for a time, carried on a profitable trade on the newly-discovered waters, and introduced English goods into Persia, by way of Astrakhan; until the jealousy of the Russian Government put a stop to their proceedings. By the treaty of Gulishan, concluded between Russia and Persia in 1813, vessels

belonging to the English were excluded from the Caspian Sea.

After the failure in 1715, no further attempt was made to conquer the regions beyond the Caspian until the year 1839; when an expedition was sent out under General Perofsky, with the twofold object of making scientific discoveries, and of putting an end to the disorderly state of the steppe by bringing the Khan of Khiva to terms. But, owing to the mistaken policy of making the campaign in the winter, which set in early and was unusually severe, the expedition returned without seeing the enemy, and with the loss of two-thirds of the men and of nearly all the camels. Undaunted by these tremendous losses, the Russians have since advanced slowly in the steppe, erecting forts in the most important points; and, by getting possession of the district between the Caspian and the Sea of Aral, have rendered the latter sea safe for Russian steamers.

The Sea of Aral, like the Caspian, is subject to great evaporation over its extensive surface of 25,860 square miles; which is not compensated for by the waters of the two rivers flowing into it, the Amou Daria and the Syr Daria, the Oxus and Jaxartes of the ancients. As a consequence, the sea is diminishing in size, and its configuration is being gradually altered. The water is slightly bitter and salt, and abounds in fish; but the sea, throughout, is so shallow

that it is most safely navigated in flat-bottomed boats. In spite of this shallowness, the Russians maintain on it a fleet of six steam-vessels, armed with thirteen guns, of which the station is the island of Nicholas the First. Nothing can be imagined much more dreary than the islands, or *Aral*, which give a name to the sea.[1] They are formed by the sands drifting between the reed patches which grow out of the shallow waters. The salt plains which surround it on all sides are equally dreary, except where the two rivers fall into the sea and break the desolation of the scene. At the south-west end, the sea lengthens out into a lake eighty miles long and twenty miles broad, called Ailbugir. Between the Sea of Aral and the Caspian is the bare plateau Ust Urt, "which rises to an elevation of about 600 feet above the Sea of Aral, with edges sharply marked by a steep wall-like descent, called the Chiak."

In 1873 the Russian army, under General Verechin and General Kaufman, succeeded in reaching Khiva, and in reducing to submission the Khan, who had supported the Kirghiz in their revolts against the Russian Government, and had continued to plunder the caravans. Bound by the assurance given by

[1] Keith Johnston. "Geography, Physical, Historical, and Descriptive," p. 283.

Count Schouvalof to the British Government, that Khiva should not be annexed, the Russians contented themselves with compelling the Khan to conduct his government as a vassal, with the assistance of a council composed of Khivan dignitaries and of Russian officers, and to surrender a portion of his dominions to the Khan of Bokhara. The Khan, finding his position amid his discontented subjects somewhat precarious, begged to be allowed to exchange his sovereignty for a pension. This application did not, for a long period, receive any answer; but it is now stated that all this eastern border land of the Caspian, as far south as the Atrek river and the Persian boundary, has been formed into the Russian Transcaspian province.

South of the Sea of Aral, for a distance of twenty miles, extends the delta of the Amou Daria, formed by the number of arms into which the river is divided, each of which bears a different name. This fertile, verdant, and well-watered district, surrounded by vast barren deserts, has always been a resting-place for the tribes and nations who have in successive ages wandered through these regions. The varied physiognomies and dialects of the present occupants, as well as their songs and legends, bear witness to the diversity of the nations from which they have sprung. Thc most numerous tribe are the Karakalpaks, a clan of Uzbeks, whose chief seat is the delta of the

Amou Daria, though a number of them live near Samarcand.[1] The exploration of this region, and of the course of the ancient bed of the Oxus, between the Aral and the Caspian Seas, was the chief object of the Russian Expedition of 1875.

The area of the Khanate of Khiva is 22,361 square miles. It consists mostly of sandy desert, with fertile districts along the banks of the Amou Daria, which produce grain, and flax, and cotton, and plentiful supplies of fruit. The culture of silk is carried on to a considerable extent, and sheep and cattle are reared. There is a large trade with Russia by way of Orenburg and Astrakhan, in agricultural produce and silk and cotton fabrics, which are partly conveyed overland by camels, partly by boats across the Caspian. The population is very mixed, but the dominant race are Uzbeks.

The city of Khiva is of an oblong form, is surrounded by a wall of baked brick and dried clay about fifty feet high, and is entered by four high gates. Inside this, and a quarter of a mile distant, is a second wall somewhat lower, with a dry ditch which immediately encloses the town. "The streets are broad and clean, whilst the houses belonging to the richer inhabitants are built of highly-polished bricks and

[1] "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 107.

coloured tiles."[1] The principal buildings are a bazaar, with a thatched roof that protects buyers and sellers from the sun, nine *medresses*, or schools, and seventeen mosques, constructed with high domes, painted in bright colours and ornamented with frescos. The chief one, which is also the burial-place of the Khan's ancestors, is Palo-an-ato, and is distinguished by its decoration on the inside with vividly-coloured tiles. The population is set down by Captain Burnaby as about 35,000; but, according to Mr. Keith Johnston, "very little business is transacted here, the chief commercial activity of the Khanates being at Kana-Urghench."

The general government of Turkestan, which forms the southern portion of Russian Central Asia, extends eastward from the Sea of Aral and the Transcaspian province to Mongolia, and has for its southern boundary the Thian Shan range. Possession of this vast district was obtained by various expeditions commencing in 1864. The line of the Syr Daria was first secured, then Tashkend was taken, and the possessions of the Khan of Khokand were annexed; and in 1868 the Khan of Bokhara, who had raised the standard for a holy war, was defeated by General Kaufman; who captured Samarcand, took possession of the fertile valley of Zarafstan, and reduced the

[1] "A Ride to Khiva," p. 296.

Khan to a vassal of the empire. And in 1875 the Khokandians, resenting the submission of the Khan to Russia, broke out into open rebellion, and were joined by the Khan's two sons. Deposed and forced to abandon his capital, he took refuge at Orenburg; and the Russians, having put down the rebellion, held this fair territory, which is more fertile than any of their other possessions, with an army of 50,000 men.

The vast region thus acquired, and called Russian Turkestan, has an area of about 460,000 square miles. In a work just published on the "Territory of Turkestan,"[1] by Colonel Kostenko, we are informed that this extensive Russian province contains 3,269,013 inhabitants, exclusive of the army, and it may be added of a few Jews, divided as follows: Russians, 59,283; Tartars, 7,300; Sarts, 690,305; Tajiks, 137,285; Uzbeks, 182,120; Karakalpaks, 58,770; Kipchaks, 70,107; Turcomans, 5,860; Dungans, 20,000; Tarantchis, 36,262; Kirghiz, 1,462,693; Kuramintzis, 77,301; Kalmucs, 24,787; Mongols, 22,117; Persians, 2,926; Hindoos, 857. Of the Russians, apart from the army, 44,089 live in the town of Semiretchinsk, mostly peasants and agricultural Cossacks. In Syr Daria there are 8,447, of whom 5,000 are in Tashkend; there are 1,229 in Ferghana,

[1] *Times* newspaper, 14th December, 1880.

3,838 in Zarafshan, and 1,184 in Amou Daria. Tashkend has 85,951 inhabitants, without the troops."

Up to the year 1867 the affairs of Central Asia were under the control of the Governor of Orenburg, but in that year an ukase announced that the Central-Asian possessions were formed into a government, with its seat at Tashkend. "The Governor-General of this extensive province is appointed by the Tsar, and within the limits of his authority he exercises supreme power, without control of any kind whatever."

The chain of the Thian Shan mountains forms for a considerable distance its southern boundary; and in the interior the country is traversed by mountain chains running mostly from north-west to south-east, of which the most important are the Tarbaga Tau and the Ala Tau, both full of grand and picturesque scenery. Further east are the double chains of the Alexandrovsky and the Trans-Ala Tau Ranges, in which the three-headed Talgar rises to a height of 17,000 feet. The lowlands are either more or less fertile steppes, or deserts mostly composed of coloured sand; of the largest are the desert of Kisil Kum (Red sand) on the left bank of the Syr Daria, and of the Kara Kum, or Black sand, on the right bank.

The country is intersected by two large rivers, running for the most part parallel courses, the Amou Daria, the ancient Oxus, and the Syr Daria, the

ancient Jaxartes. The Amou Daria, rising in a lake in the mountain range north of Cabul, 15,600 feet above the sea,[1] runs a course of about 1,300 miles, mostly through sandy and unfruitful regions, and receives some large affluents. About twenty miles south of the Sea of Aral it branches out in several arms, and so empties itself into that sea.

The Syr Daria, the ancient Jaxartes, rises in the Thian Shan mountains 11,000 feet above the level of the sea, and after a course of 900 miles falls into the the Sea of Aral at its north-eastern extremity. It is navigable for 500 miles certainly, and according to some geographers, throughout its whole course ; but owing to the swiftness of the currents and the frequent changes in its bed, there is not much prospect of making it useful as a water-way.

The other rivers of Turkestan are the Ili, which rises in the Thian Shan mountains, and flows west into Lake Bulkash, a salt lake with an area of 7,956 square miles ; the Tchoui, which runs west through the desert of the Kirghiz Cossacks into Lake Kabak-Koulak; and the Yar-Yatchi, which springing from the Tchingis mountains flows south-west into Lake Telekoul.

The climate in the northern part of Turkestan above the river Ili is in summer exceedingly hot and dry, and in winter extremely cold ; the Syr

[1] "England and Russia in Central Asia," vol. i., p. 68.

Daria being covered with ice for 120 days in the year. Further south the winter is less severe, and in the valley of Hodjend the Syr Daria rarely freezes. Even in the mountain districts the rainfall in the summer is small. The products vary with the climate; the luxuriant orchards in the south yield grapes, and figs, and other fruits in abundance; corn and rice are plentiful, cotton is grown in large quantities, and the culture of silk is the chief occupation in many parts of Zarafshan, Hodjend, and Kurama.[1] The great snow mountains, Thian Shan, which rise to a height of more than 18,000 feet, are clothed with wood for about 6,000 feet; and in the valley of Hodjend, and all the small mountain valleys south of forty-two degrees of latitude, pistachio-trees will grow as far as 3,500 feet above the level of the sea, wild peaches reach 4,000 feet, wild almonds, 4,500, apricots, 5,000, and wild apples, 6,500 feet.

In spring, when the sun has melted the snow, the steppes are decked with a carpet of fresh green grass diversified with the most lovely flowers, among which the small fragrant yellow tulip is conspicuous. But the spring vegetation soon withers and dies beneath the oppressive heat which in summer parches the earth. Along the banks of the Syr Daria are occasional marshes and thickets

[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 191.

of brushwood, which abound with game, with wolves and foxes, and, it is said, with tigers also. The mounds, which mark the sites of ancient cities, and the manifest traces of former cultivation that are to be met with, show that this region was once more populated than it is at the present time. A writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, of the 16th of December, 1880, says: "We are so much occupied with the military operations of Russia in Central Asia that we give her little or no credit for the really useful public works that are being carried out by her in the territory she has acquired. The banks of the Syr Daria once supported a flourishing population, who rendered the neighbouring country fruitful by means of irrigation canals, which were, however, destroyed by the invading Mongols, and the country converted into a desert. Within the last three years, by the efforts of the Governor of Kazalinsk Circle, nearly 100 miles of these canals have been restored, and the desert thus fertilized has already yielded many thousand pounds of grain-crops. The Kirghiz who inhabit the country work with a will for a month or two in spring and autumn, as many as 4,000 being engaged on one canal at a time. These works cost the Government very little, as most of the people supply their own tools and provisions."

Of the inhabitants, the Kirghiz have already been

described. The Tadjiks, are of the old Aryan race, who originally inhabited the country between the Syr and the Amou, as well as Khokand and Kashgar. They are a fine race of men; but through long subjection to the Uzbeks, they have lost their manliness, and are fickle, untruthful, cowardly, and morally corrupted.[1] They are, to a great extent, traders, clerks, and mechanics, and also agriculturists.

The Uzbeks are the descendants of the Turks, who, before and after the time of Tchinghiz Khan, occupied this part of Asia. They are divided into clans, each of which is as devoted to his chief, as the Scottish clansmen have been and are. Simple in their habits, and despising the Tadjik effeminacy and love of dress, they are essentially a warrior race; and, though settling for short periods in one locality or another, live a nomad life.

The natives of Tashkend are known by the name of *Sarts*, which means inhabitants of a city. The nomads, who are styled *Kayaks*, or wanderers, despise the dwellers in towns, and use the term *Sart* to denote a coward and an effeminate person.[2]

In 1867, when Turkestan was separated from the government of Orenburg, and placed under the command of a separate Governor-General, a part of the Siberian province of Semipalatinsk was added to

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[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 198. [2] Ibid., p. 105.

Turkestan. This severance has placed the Kirghiz under two separate governments, and has produced many disputes and difficulties, which were foreseen by General Kryzhanofsky, who stood alone in opposition to the scheme. For the purposes of administration, the government is divided into the provinces of Syr Daria and of Semiretch, at the head of each of which is a Prefect, "who has both the police and the general supervision of all the inhabitants of the district, Russian as well as native."[1]

It would be useless to attempt a description of the administration; for schemes for its reform and amelioration are being continually proposed; and though they have been hitherto as frequently rejected, the attempt is not abandoned. A Russian officer of experience, quoted by Dr. Schuyler,[2] writes as follows on the proposed schemes: "The new *régime* will assimilate the position of Asiatics to that of Russians and subject them to the same laws, notwithstanding the fact that our Government, on annexing the country, formally declared to the inhabitants that their judicial system, called the Shariat, should be guaranteed to them. This declaration constituted one of the chief elements of our moral and political influence over the natives. Of course Russian legislation must be applied, sooner or later, to the Asiatic

[1] "Turkestan," vol. ii., p. 205.

[2] Ibid., p. 210.

peoples who enter into the circle of our possessions; but it would be better for this to be brought about later than sooner; for it is impossible to use constraint with regard to the manners and customs of the country, and annul a *régime* of tolerance, especially when we do not even know the country which we wish to reform from top to bottom. In acting thus, we committed a great fault, of which our antagonists have always taken advantage. It is evident that there ought to be no question about introducing new things into a country where we have not yet succeeded in acquiring a just idea of the old."

In some details, however, and these not unimportant ones, the opinion advocated by this officer has been carried out. Russian colonists are not permitted to settle in the province of Syr Daria; missionary projects are forbidden, and Mahometanism, the prevailing religion, is in no way interfered with; and no attempt has been made to establish a system of education for the natives. For the material interests of the country something has been done, in the improvement of the roads and the construction of bridges; but no attempts of importance have been made to instruct the natives in a better system of agriculture, or of the cultivation of cotton.

The greater portion of the inhabitants of Central Asia are occupied in the breeding of sheep and

cattle, and in agriculture. Dr. Schuyler[1] states that only one and six-tenths per cent. of the whole area of Central Asia, including the desert of Kizil Kum, is capable of cultivation ; and that of this seven and seven-tenths per cent. is arable. This arable land is situated in narrow strips along the banks of the rivers and at the base of the mountain ranges. The land near the rivers is cultivated by irrigation, and yields a great variety of produce ; that which lies near the mountains is dependent for fertility upon the spring and autumn rains ; and, though the harvests are less certain, in favourable years it bears abundant crops of grain. But the produce is not sufficient to do more than meet the wants of the native population ; and, since the occupation of the Russians, grain for the support of the army has been imported from Siberia and other districts. Cotton is grown in many of the fruitful valleys, and about twenty-five million pounds are sent annually to Russia ; but it is short, poor, fibrous, and very dirty. Silk, for which the climate is favourable, owing to the absence of rain and hail and the infrequency of thunderstorms, is largely cultivated ; and, though Bokhara produces the best quality, Khokand, Tashkend, and Khiva also produce two

[1] "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 284.

millions and a half pounds avoirdupois, of a good quality.[1] Several attempts have been made by Russians to establish manufactories for the winding of the silk from the cocoon, but they have not been successful; and the Uzbek retains in his own hands an industry for which he is specially fitted.

But the gardens and the orchards are the pride of the land; they abound in vines, pomegranates, almonds, peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums, cherries, apples, pears, quinces, melons of many kinds, and the water-melon. It is difficult to convey an idea of the beauty of the country in spring, when the various fruit-trees are in bloom, or of the perfume with which the air is filled.

Tashkend is the chief city, and the residence of the Russian Governor-General. It is situated on the steppe, and surrounded by a wall, said to be sixteen miles in length, which has twelve gates, and is castellated and embrasured for cannon. Though the wall may possibly be useful as a protection against robber hordes, it could not withstand a regular siege. A portion has been removed, in order to allow of the extension of the Russian quarter which has proceeded rapidly. The native streets are most irregular and winding. Through the larger number runs a canal, supplied with water from a source in

[1] "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 194.

the mountains sixteen miles distant, on the banks of which willows and poplars flourish, giving shade to the houses and a bright aspect to the city. The houses, of one storey, are built of bricks of clay dried in the sun, and thatched with reeds; over which is annually spread a thick coat of clay. The appearance of the streets is diversified by 300 mosques, which are scattered about the town and are mostly small and dilapidated; by the Tartar *medresses* or colleges, "where nothing is taught that does not bear on religion or law;"[1] by the caravanserais for the use of the traders; and by the *machtals*, or primary schools, of which one is attached to each mosque. The bazaar consists of streets of mud-roofed shops and houses, each street being devoted to a single trade; and looks as if neither change nor improvement had taken place in it since its first erection. The Russians have opened a new bazaar, mainly for the sale of food and small wares; and there are several smaller native bazaars, of which the most celebrated is the Urda, near the border of the Russian town.

The population probably numbers about 120,000, chiefly Uzbeks, who speak the Turki language and are Mahometans. Crime is said to be rare, and when committed generally assumes the form of theft.

[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 163.

Outside the walls are gardens reaching for miles to the open steppe, which is dotted on all sides with villages bright with gardens and trees.

Through one of the most magnificent of the fruit gardens runs the road to Samarcand, passing the picturesque ruin of Old Tashkend, and crossing the Syr Daria by a ferry at Tshiras; where the Aral steamers deposit passengers and freights, and where the Russians had hoped to establish an important commercial centre; but the hope has proved vain. In the defile of Jilan-uti, an inscription on the rock records the expedition of Ulag Beg, the grandson of Timur, in 1425, and another recites the victories of Abdullah Khan in 1571. On emerging from this defile, the steppe is again reached; and, after running over hills and high ground, the road enters Samarcand.

Few cities have a more romantic history. Founded in most ancient times, and connected with traditions of one Afrosiab, its founder, it was conquered by Alexander the Great; saw his murder of his old friend Clitus; witnessed the rise and fall of the Græco-Bactrian dynasties; passed under the rule of the Yuetchji, a nomad tribe of the steppe; and, finally, in 710 A.D., was reduced by the Arabs to Mahometanism. Strange to say, for years after the Mahometan conquest, it was the see of a Christian bishop, who ruled over a diocese, which, even as late as

1246, was in a flourishing state. It was the capital of Timur Tamerlane and was visited in 1404 by Gonzalez de Clavijo, the ambassador of Henry the Third of Castile to Timur; and a hundred years later was the residence of the Great Balu, until he was compelled to abandon it. In his "Memories" he celebrates the beauty of its situation, and the grandeur of its buildings. These are now dilapidated and crumbling to ruin; amongst the most remarkable are the mosque of Shah Zindeh, erected in 1323 by Timur, the *medresse* of Babi Khanym, built by Timur's favourite wife in 1385, and other *medresses;* and on the top of a slight hill, the *Gur-Amir*, or tomb of Timur, an octagon building with a melon-shaped dome, and two ruined minarets.

The houses and streets resemble those of Tashkend; but the bazaar is small. The inhabitants number about 30,000, including a number of Jews to whom the Russian law gives equal rights with the rest of the population.[1] Dr. Schuyler remarks, "It is impossible not to be struck with the difference between the administration in Samarcand, and that in Tashkend. Nearly all the officials seem to have at heart the welfare of the country, and to be in earnest in their work."[2]

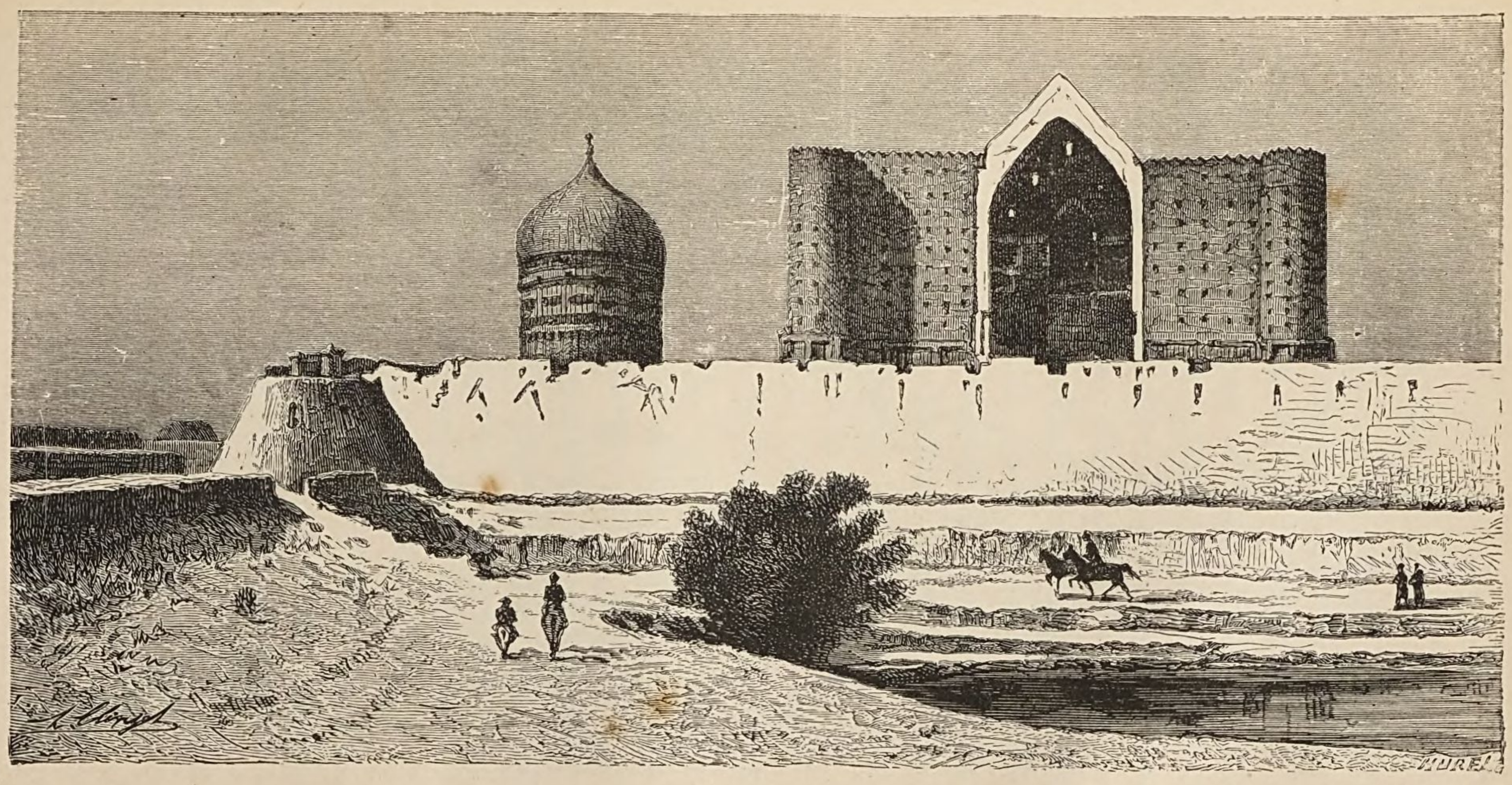
The valley of Zarafshan is of surpassing beauty. It is a basin through which the river Zarafshan runs;

[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. i., p. 259. [2] Ibid., p. 267.

and lies underneath the Zarafshan range, many of whose summits rise to 18,000 feet, and over which are two passes at the respective heights of 12,000 and 12,200 feet above the sea. But though lovely in situation the soil bears only a scant subsistence for the 30,000 inhabitants, who live by agriculture; nor has any attempt as yet been made to develop the iron-ore, coal, and silver which are known to lie beneath the surface. The poorer inhabitants wash gold from the sands of the streams, and alum is obtained in considerable quantities.

In the town of Turkestan, which has 6,000 inhabitants, and which wears a general look of desolation, the only object of interest is the mosque of Hazret Hodji Akhmett Yasavi, the founder of the sect Jahria, and the special patron of the Kirghiz, who died in 1120. The mosque, commenced by Timur in 1497, is regarded as the most holy in Central Asia; and the prefix *Hazret*, an Arabic word meaning literally *presence*, but applied to saints with a meaning of *holiness*, stamps its pre-eminence. It is an immense building, elaborately ornamented; but earthquakes, the guns of the Russians, and other engines of destruction have brought it to a state of comparative ruin.

Hodjend is the centre of extensive cotton plantations and vineyards, and also of the silk-growing districts. The population is 30,000, and the bazaar is large in proportion to their requirements.



MOSQUE HAZRET, AT TURKESTAN. (*To face p.* 416.)

From Hodjend runs the only road into the Khanate of Khokand that is passable by wheeled vehicles. The history of this Khanate for many years past is a chronicle of internal troubles and armed encounters between the residents, the Sarts, on the one side, and the nomads, the Kara Kirghiz or Bareets and the Kiptchaks, a warlike tribe of Uzbeks, on the other. This unsettled state of affairs afforded a sufficient excuse for Russian intervention; and in 1876 Skobelef occupied the country with his troops and annexed Khokand to the empire, under the name of the province of Ferghana, the name by which it was known to the ancients. It is a valley about 160 miles long and 65 miles broad in its widest part; watered by the Syr Daria, which traverses its whole length, but is useless for irrigation in its lower course, being enclosed between high banks, it is surrounded on all sides by mountains—those on the south, the Alai and Kitchi Alai ranges, rising into peaks 25,000 feet high.[1] The climate is in summer as hot as at Tashkend, and is warmer in winter; the soil is very fertile, and produces grain and rice in abundance; but the most valuable crops are silk and cotton. Minerals are abundant in the mountains; copper, lead, iron, and coal have been found. The

[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. ii., p. 55.

population, including the Sarts and the nomads, is very nearly a million. Some of the villages are occupied almost exclusively by Tanjiks, or primitive Persians.

The only exception to the fertility of the valley is the sandy waste around the city of Khokand; a comparatively modern city, with wide streets, 500 mosques, and a population of about 70,000. The chief bazaar is built with wide streets on a regular plan, and with a high roof which shades the buildings without excluding the fresh air. At Khokand is manufactured most of the paper used in Central Asia, but as it is unsuited to the inks of Europe, the Russians have to import all the paper that they themselves require.

In 1875 an expedition was sent against the Khan of Kashgar, Yakoub Beg; and it is probable that this fertile and rich country of Kashgar, with Yarkand, will before long be annexed to Russia.

The province of Semiretch is so called from the seven large rivers by which it is watered, the Aksu, the Ili, the Karatal, the Koksu, the Sepsa, the Sarkan, and the Vaskan. It is interesting as embracing in its borders the country which was the realm of Prester John. A large tract of it is barren desert; and another large tract is steppe, which in the vicinity of the mountains is well watered and bears good crops of grain. The portion north and east of Issyk

Kul, along the road leading northwards to Sergiopol, is colonized by the Russians; and there are settlements of Cossacks, who at the same time cultivate the land and protect the population. The chief towns are Vierny and Kuldja. Vierny was at first only a fortress; but owing to colonization from Siberia and Russia, and to the settlement of the Cossacks, it had in 1871 a population of 12,000; and is now a flourishing modern town with a good trade which Chinese merchants are getting largely into their hands.[1]

Kuldja, which is the seat of the Russian government, was originally a Tartar town called Kuren, and, during the Chinese rule, which commenced about the beginning of the 18th century, it was the centre of the administration. In 1755 the Chinese colonized the territory with criminals from China, and with agriculturists from East Turkestan who are known as Tarantchis, the sowers, so called from *taran*, millet.[2] Other settlers from the tribes of the Solons and the Sibos came in from Mongolia; and with them were placed another Mongol clan, the Tchaktars. Next came the Kalmucks; who were followed by criminals sent from China, and called Tchampans; to whom were added at a later period the Dungans, another Chinese race. This admixture of nationalities was a fruitful cause of dissension; and in 1860 an insurrec-

[1] Schuyler. "Turkestan," vol. ii., p. 146. [2] Ibid., p. 169.

tion broke out in Kuldja which the Chinese Government was unable to suppress. In 1867 the Dungans and Tarantchis, who had previously been united against the Chinese, fell out between themselves; and after a series of battles the Tarantchis became the rulers of the country. Ultimately the Tarantchis made themselves troublesome on the Russian frontier; and in 1870 General Kolpokovsky occupied the country with Russian troops. "The Foreign Office immediately informed the Chinese Government of the occupation of the province, and declared its readiness to restore it to China whenever a sufficient force should be brought there to hold it against attacks and to preserve order."[1] It was announced in the *Times*, of May 25, 1881, that the treaty had been concluded; and that the whole territory of Ili, including the town of Kuldja, had been ceded to China, with the exception of that part in which Russian colonization is deeply rooted. The part consists of the whole region from the post Bors-Chudsar to the river Chongoj.

The population of the territory round Kuldja, consisting of these many tribes, is less than 100,000; and of Kuldja itself 10,000. The town, which is nearly square, is walled in, each side being nearly a mile in length, and shows little trace of Chinese architecture.

[1] Schuyler; from whose account this history has been abridged. Vol. ii., p. 188.

It contains a bazaar, two large mosques, a Buddhist temple, and a small church built by French and Italian missionaries. The soil of the district is fertile; the mountains yield iron and copper in abundance; and coal, which in the absence of forests is the only fuel of the population, is found within fifteen miles of the town.

The Khanate of Bokhara is the most important of the Central Asian states, and its capital, Bokhara, is the trading centre of this part of Asia. The conquest of the Khanates has given the Russians the control of the trade, which is regulated by treaties; of which one provides for the abolition of the slave trade, another for the residence of a Russian agent, and a third for the navigation by Russians of the Amou Daria within the Khan's territory. The trade is carried on by Russia between Bokhara and Orenburg, either by way of Kazala or by way of Orsk, a distance of about eleven hundred miles, which is traversed by caravans in about forty-seven days.

To the east of the Caspian, extending to the Amou Daria on the west, and from Khiva on the north, to the borders of Persia and Afghanistan on the south, is the great district called Kara Kum. The name would lead one to expect an uniformly desolate waste of black sand, a veritable desert; but so far is this from being the case, that the landscape presents a succession of hillocks covered with shrubs and bushes, and

of oases, which in spring are green with grass and bright with flowers separated from each other by tracts of sand of a dull grey colour, approaching to black. Here for centuries the Turkomans, or Turkmen, a wild and independent race, whose hand has been against every man, have led a partly nomad and partly settled life. For a time, when Merv was in the power of the Persians, they were considered the subjects of Persia; and when Merv passed to the Khan of Khiva, they were regarded as having passed with it into the dominion of the Khan. They are divided into clans; the Chandors, who occupy the most northerly position on the southern borders of the Ust Urt, between the Caspian and Khiva, have settled down into a peaceful race of agriculturists; the Goklans, between the Caspian and the banks of the Atrek, have also changed the nomad for a settled life. They are employed in agriculture and the rearing of the silk-worm, and are subject to Persia. The Yomuds, partly settled and partly nomad, occupy the valley of the Lower Atrek and roam as far north as the Balkan Mountains: they were treated with relentless cruelty by General Golovatchef in 1873, after the fall of Khiva. The Erszari, the Alieli, and the Kara, are a peaceful people; and, finally, the Tekes, by far the most important clan, hold the fertile valley which extends from Kizil Arvat in 44° N.L. and 55° E.L., down

as far as Aliverd, Merv, and the neighbouring country across the Tejend. Their territory is defended by a line of forts; and when they are not engaged on their marauding expeditions, they pursue agriculture and silk weaving with great industry. They are a formidable warrior race, splendidly mounted on horses of a very fine breed and possessed of great powers of endurance; but they are a nation of slave-hunters and robbers. They formerly owed an undefined allegiance to the Khan of Khiva, to whom they paid over a portion of their plunder by way of tribute; but since the Khan has descended to the position of Russian vassal, they have refused to acknowledge him as their lord. They possessed, until lately, very little artillery, and only guns of an inferior manufacture; and the knowledge of this deficiency led them to make their attacks by means of surprises and ambuscades, and to avoid open fight.

It is against these brave robber hordes that Russia has been lately engaged. Her troops met with a defeat in the early part of 1880, when General Lomakine was in command. The difficult task of retrieving this disaster has been entrusted to General Skobelef; and, in the *Times* of the 26th of October, 1880, it is announced that the construction of a railway from Krasnovodsk, on the Caspian, to Kizil Arvat, is being rapidly pushed on, and that seventy miles

of it are already finished. On the 19th of November, 1880, the *Novoe Vremya* publishes a telegram, which is reprinted in the *Times*, stating that the railway has been continued twenty-four miles further, to Bakhalshim, by means of a temporary horse tramway, which is being rapidly carried forward to a distance of twelve miles farther. Along this line supplies were rapidly carried in the beginning of the year 1881; and General Skobeleff advanced with one hundred guns and 10,000 men. The Turkomans retreated to their chief stronghold, Geok Tepe, which, after a long siege, in which they fought gallantly and suffered enormous losses, was taken. The Turkomans, after this defeat, retreated to Merv, the ancient Margiana Antiocha of which Milton speaks,

> "Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
> Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian vales;"

and shortly afterwards submitted themselves to the Russian rule. An Imperial Ukase was issued on the 24th of May, 1881, "incorporating the Teke territory and the Trans-Caspian military district with the Caucasian military district, with the title of the Trans-Caspian territory, and under the administration of the Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasian army."[1] The *Novoe Vremya* remarks on this Ukase,

[1] The *Times*, May 25, 1881.

"that in the event of an expedition being undertaken against India, the best, if not the only route to Herat and Candahar lies along the river Atrek. The occupation must induce the friendly disposition of England towards us. It will strengthen our friendly ties with Persia, whose northern provinces will no longer be raided by the savage Turkomans; and it will finally subject Khiva, Bokhara, and other semi-independent Asiatic Khanates, to Russia's political influence."[1]

At present no announcement has been made of the extent of territory thus conquered; but it must be considerable. "A new work by M. Strelbitzky, describing the acquisitions of territory made by Russia during the reign of Alexander II., has just been published at St. Petersburg. The writer says the late Tsar left Russia the largest State in the world, extending from the thirty-seventh to the seventy-eighth degree of north latitude, and covering an area of about 19,500,000 square versts. During his reign the amount of territory added to the empire was 1,818,927 square versts, of which 1,163,700 were ceded to the United States, leaving a net increase of 655,227 square versts in twenty-five years. So great an addition of territory was not made to the empire during any previous reign—not even in that of Catherine II., who became famous by her conquests,

[1] Quoted in the *Standard*, May 27, 1881.

and yet acquired for Russia 2,000 square miles less land than did Alexander II. M. Strelbitzky further remarks that all the Russian possessions in Europe and Asia, notwithstanding their great extent, form a single country, which is of great importance for their administration and defence. Under the late Tsar's reign scarcely a year passed without a change in the frontiers of Russia. By the treaty concluded at Aigun in 1858 by Count Mouravief Amoorsky, Russia gained 507,500 square versts in the valley of the Amoor; the Treaty of Pekin, signed by Count Ignatief in 1860, gave her the Ussuri district, covering an area of 282,000 square versts; and in 1864 and 1865 General Tchernayef, in his Turkestan campaigns, conquered for Russia 145,000 square versts; and in 1873 Russia gained 258,000 square versts by the expedition to Khiva. On the other hand, she lost territory by the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and the sale to the United States of Alaska for 7,200,000 dollars in 1867."[1]

What the object of the Russian Government is in making this and other advances into Central Asia is hotly disputed. One party foresees that if Merv be taken, Herat will be occupied, with a view to the conquest of India, in obedience to the directions contained in the will of Peter the Great.

[1] *St. James's Gazette*, May 10th, 1881.

The other party, whose views are well put forth by Mr. Herbert Barry, regard the Russian policy to be one of trade and commerce only; arguing that even the Asiatic deserts contain fertile oases, and produce cotton, silk, and other articles, which it is of the greatest importance that "Russia should receive from her own possessions, or overland *viâ* a tributary state," and that "the manufactures of Russia are more suited for eastern marts than any others."[1]

Whether the conquests are dictated by a due regard to Imperial interests, or by an unbridled lust of conquest, and whether the means employed to secure these objects are morally justifiable, are questions admitting of argument. But that the subjugation of Central Asia, hitherto the prey of plundering hordes and the scene of the most hideous forms of despotism, by any European power, even by one which carries on the work of civilization as imperfectly as Russia, is a gain to our common humanity, there can be no reasonable doubt. Since England has declined the work, Central Asia has but one heir, and that heir is, unquestionably, Russia.

In her European Empire and in Central Asia, "Russia has a future before her so great that no man can realize what she may become: whether her power will be used for good or for evil must depend on the

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 406.

minds of her future rulers. With peace, she holds in her hands a destiny unequalled for its greatness in the pages of history; let us hope that future generations will admit that this destiny has been wielded for the good of mankind."[1]

THE CASPIAN.

[1] "Russia in 1870," p. 416.

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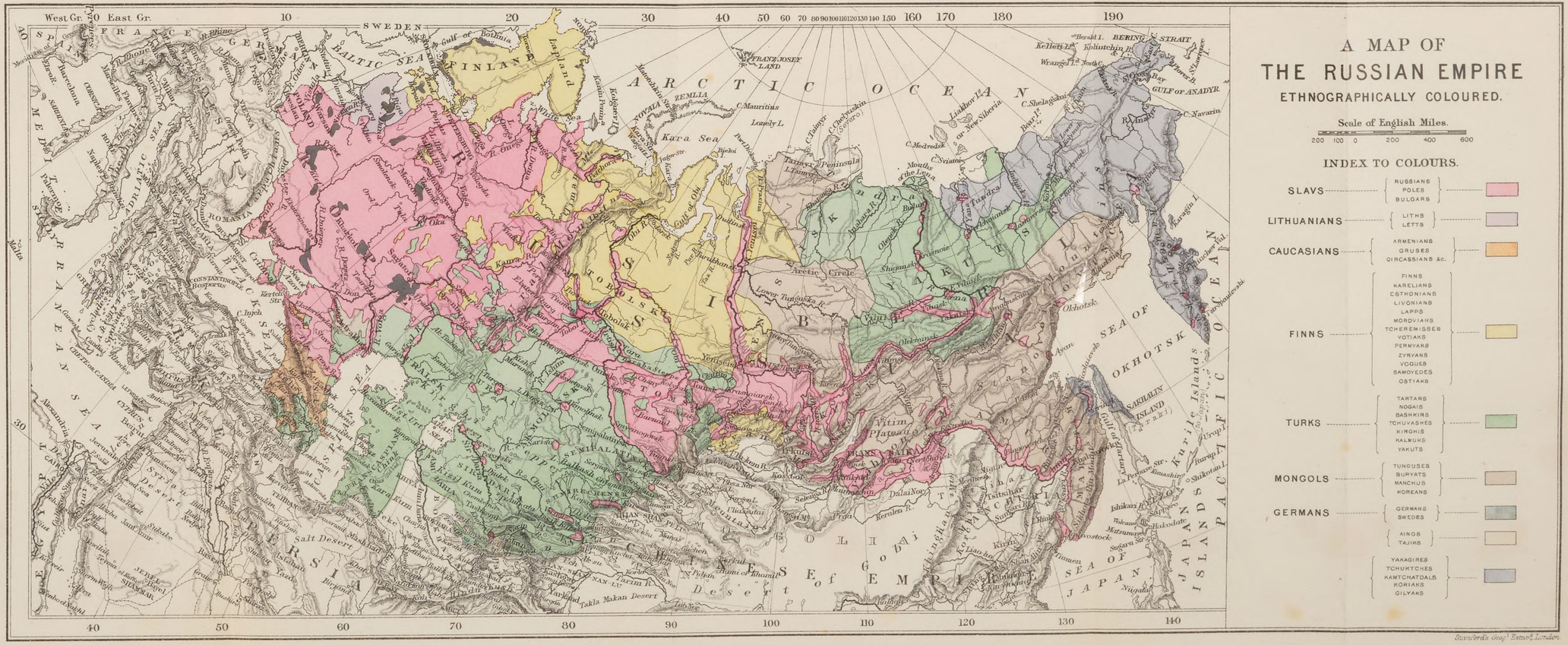
A MAP OF
THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE
ETHNOGRAPHICALLY COLOURED.
Scale of English Miles.
200 100 0 200 400 600
INDEX TO COLOURS.
SLAVS
RUSSIANS
POLES
BULGARS
LITHUANIANS
LITHS
LETTS
CAUCASIANS
ARMENIANS
GRUSES
CIRCASSIANS &c.
FINNS
FINNS
KARELIANS
ESTHONIANS
LIVONIANS
LAPPS
MORDVIANS
TCHEREMISSES
VOTIAKS
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